

**PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEER TRAINING  
EFFECTIVENESS WITHIN THE REGIONAL AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY  
OFFICE IN WISCONSIN**

**By**

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**ABSTRACT**

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Perception on the Importance of Volunteer Training Effectiveness within the Regional  
(Title)

American Cancer Society Office in Wisconsin

_____	Dr. Carol Mooney	May, 2003	41
(Graduate Major)	(Research Advisor)	(Month/Year)	(No. Pgs.)

\_\_\_\_\_ American Psychological Association  
(Name of Style Manual Used in this Study)

The purpose for this research study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the volunteer training within the Regional Office of the American Cancer Society. Since the American Cancer Society is a non-profit organization, it is funded by various events that take place throughout the year. These events wouldn't be successful without the volunteers who assist with implementing the events to complete success.

The research analyzes the effectiveness of the American Cancer Society employees along with the volunteers that assist with the organization. The research study conducted two survey instruments for both the employees and volunteers.

The study determined that the training program within the American Cancer Society was a significant part for the entire organization and for everyone involved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several individuals who have continuously supported me throughout this entire adventure. First, I would like to thank someone who has not only become my Research Advisor, but also my mentor, Dr. Carol Mooney. She has given me the guidance, support, and encouragement throughout this entire process. I would like to thank my fiancé, Andy, for his continuous support and his positive attitude throughout this project. I would also like to thank my parents and sister for always supporting every decision that I have chosen to make in my life, whether they agreed with it or not. I don't know what I would have done without them in my life.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background Information of American Cancer Society**

The American Cancer Society was founded in 1946 by women and men who were involved in scientific studies to narrow down the cause of the various cancers that many individuals had unfortunately died from. Ever since the founding of this non-profit organization, many understand the importance of research towards cures against this life-threatening disease.

The American Cancer Society started out with one location within the United States and has increased over the years to over four-hundred locations nationwide. The Northeast Regional office in Eau Claire was founded in 1983 with a total of only three employees, and presently in the year 2003, now has a total of thirteen (American Cancer Society, 2003). The creation of the Midwest Division was incorporated in 1998 for the sole purpose of joining the Divisions. The Midwest Division includes the states of: Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin (Allen, 2002). This progression along with the increasing amount of American Cancer Society employees allows for the many possibilities for the future progress against the disease that takes many loved ones from families on a daily basis.

As a non-profit organization, the majority of the funding is from many different events and fundraisers in which volunteers are needed to make the event a success. Unfortunately, if there is not a high response from volunteers and donations, then the entire organization is unable to obtain their goals of more scientific research for a

possible cure. The American Cancer Society believes in the fight against cancer and strives to focus on its mission for the organization.

The volunteer program within the American Cancer Society is critical to the overall success of the organization and its various fundraising events; without thoroughly trained volunteers, the organization is affected.

### **American Cancer Society Mission Statement**

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy, and service (American Cancer Society, 2003).

### **International Mission**

The American Cancer Society's international mission concentrates on developing cancer societies and on collaboration with other cancer-related organizations throughout the world by carrying out the strategic directions of the American Cancer Society.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem identified was to evaluate both the employees' and volunteers' perceptions on the volunteer training and its effectiveness within the Northeast Region office of the American Cancer Society. The training program has up to this point never been evaluated for its overall effectiveness.

### **Research Objectives**

The research objectives of the study include:

1. Assess the training program by the participants.

2. Assess the training program by the employees.
3. Identify the problems within the training encountered by ACS employees.
4. Identify the training needs of the program.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research study's major limitations include:

1. There is a limited amount of literature resources available in regards to the overall training program of the Regional, Eau Claire office.
2. The study will also be confined to the Northeast Region office of Eau Claire, and therefore some of the data may be different in the other Midwest Divisions.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The overall assumptions of the study are:

1. All of the Northeast Region volunteers have participated in the volunteer training program in the Eau Claire office.
2. The four income development employees of the Northeast Region office have all received the original orientation and training program when they were first hired.
3. The income development employees would redevelop the training program for all of the new volunteers upon results of this research study.

### **Definitions of Terms**

**ACS-** American Cancer Society

**American Cancer Society-** is a non-profit organization, for sole purpose of beating cancer

**Advocacy-** involvement of public policy; making legislation aware of the fight



against cancer

**Cancer-** disease that can be life threatening

**Community Crusade-**door-to-door to conduct a neighborhood campaign

**Daffodil Days-** sell daffodils to businesses and organizations in celebration of hope

**Education-** various programs available for cancer patients and their families to understand more about the disease

**Finish Line Events-** dedicates funds to breast cancer research

**Fundraising-** raising money to fund research, programs, services, and advocate for effective public policy

**Income Development Employees-** American Cancer Society employees whose job responsibilities are to raise money for cancer research by organizing special fundraising events

**Relay for Life-** overnight team event where at least one team member is walking at all times for the fight against cancer

**Service-** providing cancer care for patients, survivors, and their support network

**Training Program-** program designed to train volunteers on a specific event

**Volunteer-** an individual willing to lend a helping hand without being paid

The following chapter displays a variety of literature reviews that help reintegrate the importance of this study for the American Cancer Society and its training program.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction of Training

Training is a planned and systematic effort to modify or develop knowledge/skill/attitude through learning experience, to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose is to enable an individual to acquire abilities in order that he or she can perform adequately a given task or job (Buckle and Caple, 1990). Training within an organization becomes a process of teaching a variety of skills to new individuals which could be employees or volunteers.

The American Society of Training and Development, felt that companies should spend four percent of their payroll on training employees, however, this level of expenditure within American companies was rarely successful. Some companies have been known to allocate as much as three to four percent of their payroll cost on training, but most companies only spend about one percent (1992). Increasing competition, cost consciousness, and a desire to serve customers better have persuaded many organizations to form small training departments (Nadler, 1989). The American Cancer Society believes that training is essential to continue to provide effective services to their clients. These services are provided by fundraising, and in turn, that is where the volunteers fall into play. The volunteers are the individuals who volunteer their free time to assist in the planning and implementation process of various events that the American Cancer Society sponsors.

As a non-profit organization, the American Cancer Society needs to continue to be creative with their yearly financing to place the fundraising money directly to

continuous cancer research. Never underestimate what can be done through creative use of resources and other people within the organization; there is no limit in what a person or organization can do (Shine, 1990). Most organizations face budget constraints that require training effectiveness to increase as the need for training increases (Johnson, 1993).

### **The Role of Training**

The value of training is an increasingly important role within today's society. There are many companies and organizations that have implemented an actual training department that is responsible for various roles, they include new employees along with past employees, on training possibly new equipment that the company has acquired in. The training departments within these companies strive to make employees knowledgeable of their job roles.

According to Rothwell and Sredl (1992), employee training is usually considered a short-term change effort. It should be used to help individuals in their new job and to understand their job-related knowledge and skills effectively. The American Cancer Society believes that having a training program for their volunteers will only assist in making the events run efficiently and the overall organization will benefit from the effectiveness of the training.

### **Training Analysis**

When reviewing a training department, there are certain steps that should go into the process. The first step in any training needs analysis is to differentiate between training wants and true training needs (Nowack, 1991). When looking at training wants, an organization would want to look at specific job duties and behaviors because if they

appear to look unimportant, then this may cause employees to have low proficiency and understanding of these roles. A training need exists when a job task and behavior were shown as important, however the employees continue to have low proficiency of these tasks. A training need exists whenever an employee lacks the knowledge or skills to perform an assigned task in a “satisfactory” manner (Johnson, 2002).

According to Harris and DeSimone (1994) training needs can exist in any of the following three levels:

1. Organization analysis is a process used to better understand the characteristics of the organization to determine where training is needed and the conditions within which they will be conducted.
2. Task analysis is a systematic collection of data about a specific job to determine what an employee should be taught.
3. Personal analysis is directed at determining the training needs of the individual employee. The focus is typically on how well each employee is performing key job tasks.

Within task analysis, the key is to identify specific performance problems within the organization to determine how to develop and improve performance support systems and training (Royle, 1999). When determining the ingredients of poor performance, and to uncover the most beneficial solution in approaching the training needs and wants, there are three areas to review.

1. Target population is the employee or a defined group of employees.
2. Work environment is the physical space as well as the organizational culture and climate in which the job is performed.

3. Job tasks are the work assignments that are being performed inadequately or where improvement is sought (Royle, 1999).

### **Training Evaluation**

The purpose of evaluating a training program or training department is to determine what the program is accomplishing and also it is a way to determine what could be altered to make it even more successful for all who are involved. There are three reasons on why a company needs to evaluate training which include:

1. To gain information on how to improve future programs.
2. To decide whether to continue or discontinue training programs.
3. To justify the existence of the training department by showing how it contributes to the organization's objectives and goals (Johnson, 2002).

There are various areas that can be reviewed when looking at a training program. All of the areas play a significant role in the overall success of a training program. Some include:

- Teaching technique
- Training environment
- Training schedule
- Training materials
- Cost effectiveness
- Individuals involved

According to Donald Kirkpatrick's (Johnson, 2002), there are four levels of evaluation that should be used when providing the most effective evaluation on a training

program. Kirkpatrick believes that these levels provide ample information that trainers need to better assist all of the trainees that take part in a program. These four levels include:

**Level 1: Reaction**

This level identifies how well the trainees actually like the training program; it measures the overall customer delight of the program.

**Level 2: Learning**

This level focuses on the facts and techniques that were understood and absorbed by the trainees involved.

**Level 3: Behavior**

This level deals with the extent to which change in behavior has occurred on the job because of the participation in the training program.

**Level 4: Results**

This level is the final stage of the process in which the results that occur in the organization are measured because the trainee participated in the training program.

Training continues to be a major part of an organization whether or not the department consists of five employees or fifteen. The training departments within companies provide the necessary information and training to better assist employees on understanding their job roles. This in turn provides more productivity, increased morale, and overall higher job satisfaction within a company.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this research study was to:

1. Assess the training program by the participants.
2. Assess the training program by the employees.
3. Identify the problems within the training encountered by American Cancer Society employees.
4. Identify the training needs for the program.

#### **Research Design**

The research participants for this study were full-time employees of the Regional American Cancer Society in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Following a review of the related literature, two survey instruments were used in order to gather data from both the volunteer and employee perceptions of the training program that is used for the new volunteers. (See Appendix).

The research objectives of the study were:

5. Assess the training program by the participants.
6. Assess the training program by the employees.
7. Identify the problems within the training encountered by American Cancer Society employees.
8. Identify the training needs for the program.

### **Research Sample Selection**

The employee survey instrument was administered to ten full-time employees of the Regional Office of the American Cancer Society. All surveys were distributed during a luncheon to all ten employees for the sole purpose of gathering the data more efficiently. The data from the employee survey was used to provide overall viewpoints from an employees' perception on the training program that is offered. Within all of the positions each employee is at a different level of education, which in turn provides a variety of feedback. These surveys covered the following employee positions within the organization:

1. Administrative Assistant
2. Advocacy Manager
3. Constituent Relations Coordinator
4. Health Initiative Coordinator
5. Income Development Coordinator
6. Income Development Manager
7. Navigator
8. Survivorship Manager

The volunteer survey instrument was administered to fifty volunteers of the Regional Office of the American Cancer Society. The surveys were distributed by means of the mail system with a deadline for completion. The goal of the data received by the volunteer survey was to provide feedback on the training program that each individual had previously participated in. The volunteers' demographics, psychographics, and



geographics provided for a wide-range of responses, due to the fact that each volunteer had different lifestyles and experiences. These volunteers covered the following job professional areas:

1. Administrative
2. Business and Marketing
3. Education
4. General Studies
5. Manufacturing
6. Medical
7. Service Occupations
8. Transportation

### **Instrumentation**

#### **Employee Survey**

The employee survey was designed by using a questionnaire format (See Appendix). It consisted of a total of ten questions on a one page, two-sided document. The survey's purpose was to gather data on the training program by the employees' viewpoints, identify the problems within the training encountered by the employees, and identify the training needs for the program. The employee survey was tested and reviewed by a research expert at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, and also by an American Cancer Society employee.

#### **Volunteer Survey**

The volunteer survey was designed by using a questionnaire format (See Appendix). It was administered by using ten questions on a one-page, two-sided

document. The survey's purpose was to gather feedback on the training program in the eyes of the volunteers themselves, identify the problems within the training encountered by the volunteers participating, and identify the training needs for the program. The volunteer survey was reviewed by a research expert at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, and also by an American Cancer Society employee.

The employee and volunteer survey instruments were designed to provide feedback from the materials used, timeframe of the program, information provided, to the teaching style performed. This data was used to determine and identify the training needs of the program to make it more successful for all involved.

### **Research Procedures**

The employee survey was administered on April 11, 2003 at a luncheon at the American Cancer Society. The researcher distributed the survey to the ten employees in attendance at the luncheon. The employees were given information prior to the distribution of the survey about the purpose of the survey and how the data would be used (See Appendix). The employees were given time to thoroughly read through the directions and complete the survey. After completion of the survey each employee deposited the survey in a manila folder found at the back door of the meeting room.

The volunteer survey was sent out on April 14, 2003 to fifty volunteers for the Regional Office of the American Cancer Society (See Appendix). An introduction letter accompanied the survey explaining the purpose of the survey and how the data would be used (See Appendix). The volunteer survey had a deadline for returning the survey of a three day turn around period. The purpose for this fast time limit was due primarily to the fact that the majority of individuals who receive surveys tend to complete a survey when

knowing there is a fast deadline. In contrast to having a month deadline then there is more of an opportunity of misplacing the materials.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis for this study consisted of the number of frequencies and also percentages of the responses of both the employee survey and also the volunteer survey. The employee survey was distributed to ten internal employees with ten responded surveys for a 100% return rate. The breakdown of each position at the Regional Office shows that each employee responded to the survey. The volunteer survey was sent to a total of thirty volunteers within the Northeast Region. The total of responded surveys was twenty with a 66.6% return rate. The volunteer surveys were distributed to various individuals throughout the area, and also individuals who have been volunteering for several years and some that have just recently started the American Cancer Society volunteer program.

The following chapter displays a complete review of the data gathered by both survey instruments. The data is clearly displayed through both graphs and charts to identify the areas that could potentially be improved.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS OF FINDINGS**

This chapter reports on the results from the employee and volunteer survey instruments. The employee survey was distributed to ten employees with a 100% response rate. The volunteer survey was distributed to a total of thirty volunteers with a total of twenty surveys sent back; therefore, the response rate was 66.6%. The data gathered from the two survey instruments based upon the responses of the individuals were used to meet the objectives of this study. The objectives for this study were:

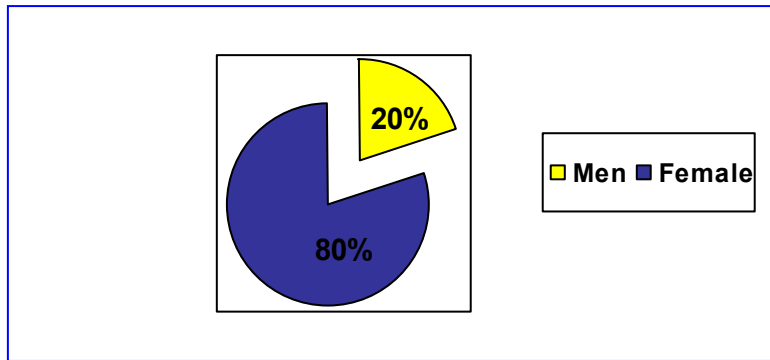
9. Assess the training program by the participants.
10. Assess the training program by the employees.
11. Identify the problems within the training encountered by American Cancer Society employees.
12. Identify the training needs for the program.

#### **Employee Survey**

The respondents provided responses that assisted in meeting the objectives for the study. For the employee survey, questions 1-2 focused on the demographic information of the respondents, questions 3-4 dealt with the amount of time that they worked with volunteers, questions 5-7 focused on how the training is done, questions 8-9 focused on the timeframe of the training; and question 10 focused on the cost effectiveness of the training program as a whole. The following ten questions were the questions used in the employee survey instrument. The various graphs and charts display the answers in which the employee respondents provided on the survey.

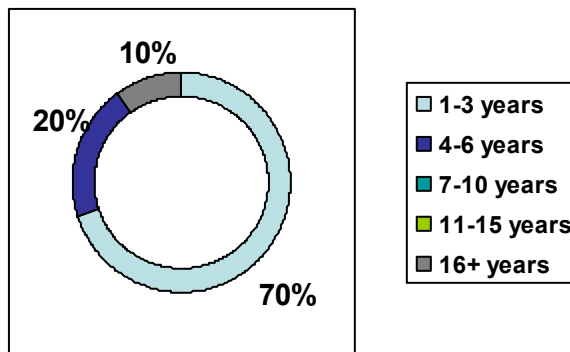
### Question 1: Demographic Information –Gender

This question focused on the demographics of the Regional Office. The results show that there was a total of eighty percent of females that took the survey, and twenty percent of males.



### Question 2: Demographic Information- Years Employed at ACS

This question focused primarily on the work experience and numbers of years the employees have been with the Regional Office. The results show that there were a total seventy percent of employees that have worked at the American Cancer Society between one to three years, twenty percent have worked there for four to six years, and ten percent have worked there for sixteen years or more.



**Question 3: Do you train ACS volunteers?**

This question was to see the number of employees that actually train the volunteers. The results display that there is a total of ninety percent of American Cancer Society employees that train the volunteers, and ten percent do not train the volunteers.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>90%</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Question 4: How often do you work with ACS volunteers?**

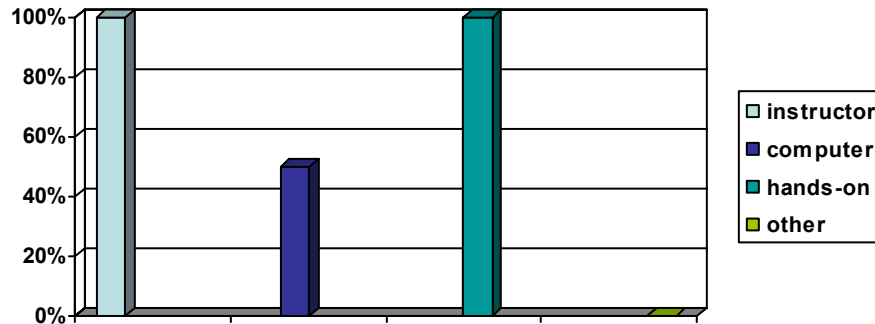
This question was to determine if working with volunteers was a part of their job position. The results of the question show that seventy percent of employees work with volunteers daily, thirty percent work with them on a seldom basis, and there is not one employee at the American Cancer that does not work with the volunteers at all.

<b>Daily</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Not At All</b>
<b>70%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Question 5: How is ACS training program conducted?**

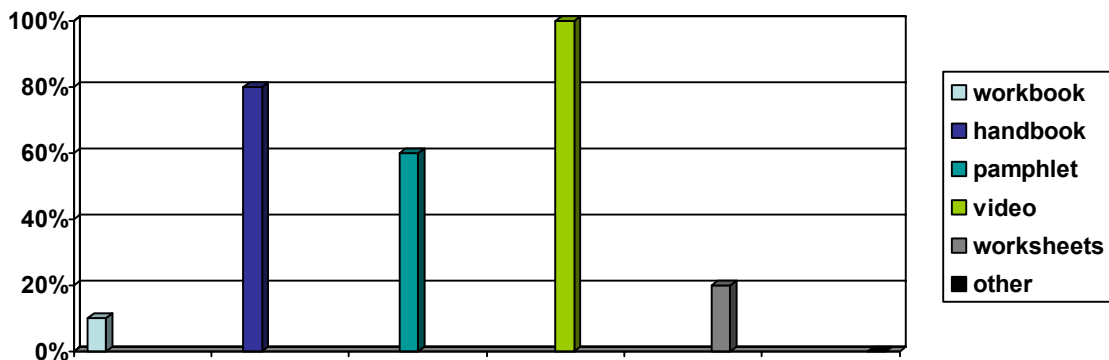
This question was to see how the training was designed and implemented. The respondents were able to check all that applied for the question. The results show

That one-hundred percent of the respondents felt that instructor based was how the program was conducted along with hands-on instruction. And there was a total of fifty percent that felt the training was also computer based.



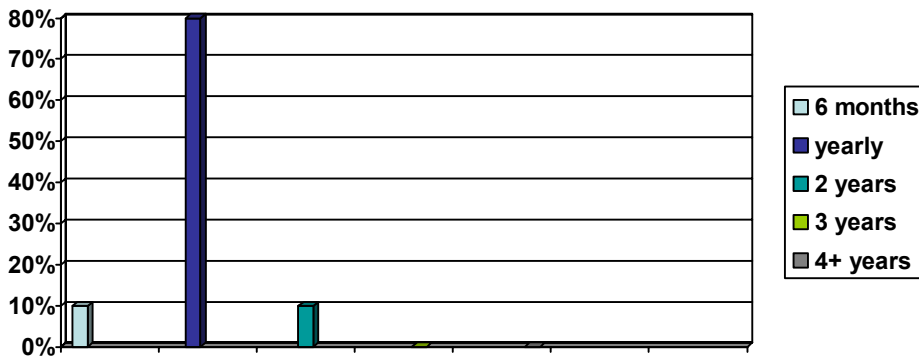
**Question 6: What materials are used for training the ACS volunteers?**

This question dealt with the specific materials used and allowed the employees to choose all that applied. The results show that one-hundred percent chose video, eight percent was calculated for using the handbook, sixty percent utilized the pamphlets, worksheets fell at twenty percent, and the workbooks were at ten percent.



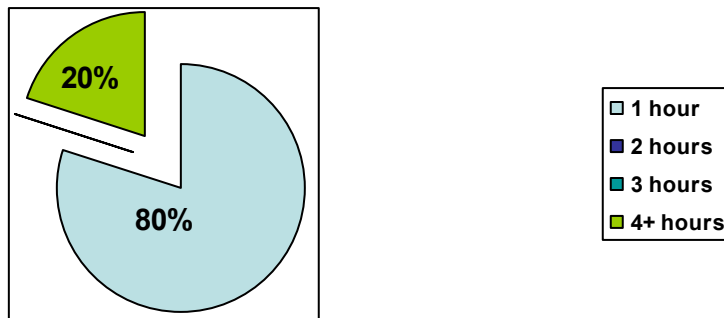
**Question 7: How often are the training materials updated?**

This question was to determine if the materials are updated to continue to keep up with changing times. One-hundred percent was factored into the materials being updated on a yearly basis, followed by ten percent chose every two years, and also every six months.



**Question 8: What is the time frame of each training session?**

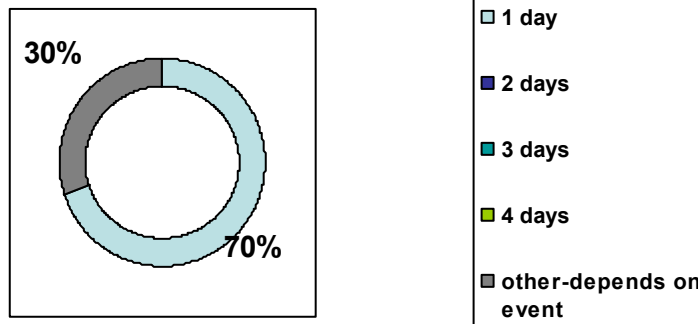
This question focused on the time length of a training session for the volunteers. Eighty percent of the sample felt the training was one hour in length, and twenty percent felt it was four hours or more.





**Question 9: How long is the training program for new volunteers?**

This question deals with the amount of days allocated for a training program. Seventy percent felt that the training was one day, and thirty percent felt that it really depended on the event.



**Question 10: Do you feel the training sessions for the volunteers are cost effective?**

This question focuses on the training and helps determine if it is cost effective for the Regional Office. Seventy percent felt that the training is cost effective, and thirty felt that it was not.

Yes	No
70%	30%

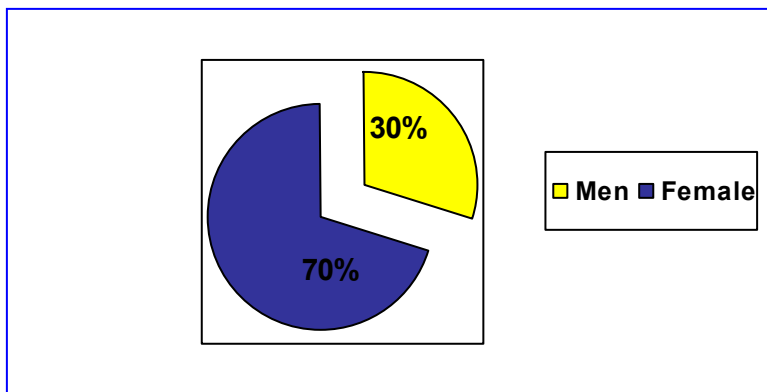
**Volunteer Survey**

For the volunteer survey, questions 1-2 focused on the demographic information of the respondents, question 3 focused on if they have received the training at all, questions 4-6 dealt with the materials and teaching styles used, question 7 focused on the length of the training session, question 8-9 focused on their likes and dislikes of the

training, and question 10 asked if they felt the training was worthwhile. The volunteer survey assisted in determining the volunteers' overall opinions of the training that they participated in at the Regional Office at the American Cancer Society. The following information displays each question followed by the various responses given by the volunteer respondents.

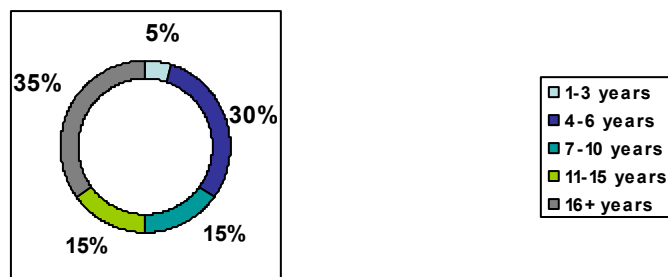
### Question 1: Demographic Information –Gender

This question focused on the demographics of the volunteers of the ACS. There was a total of seventy percent of females, and thirty percent of males who were a part of the sample.



### Question 2: Demographic Information- Years of Volunteering at the ACS

This question focused primarily on the amount of time the volunteer has participated in the volunteer program at the ACS. Five percent have been a volunteer for one to three years, thirty percent for four to six years, fifteen percent for seven to ten years and also eleven to fifteen years, and thirty-five percent for sixteen years or more.



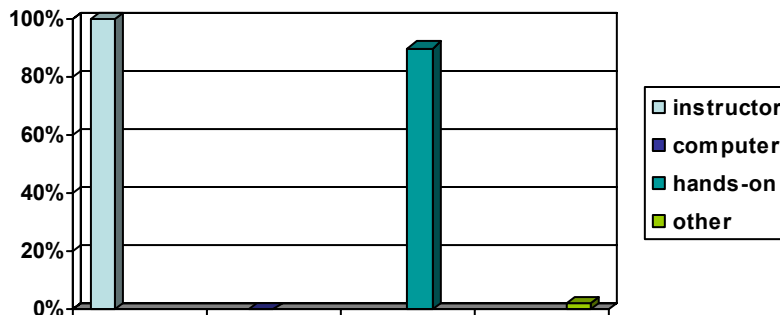
**Question 3: Have you participated in the volunteer training program?**

This question was to see the number of volunteers who actually have taken part in the ACS training program. If a volunteer answered no to this question, he or she was then asked to discontinue filling out the survey, due to the fact that the remaining questions focused on the training program. The total number of respondents who continued to take the survey after question three was twelve, and eight respondents stopped after this question.

Yes	No
60%	40%

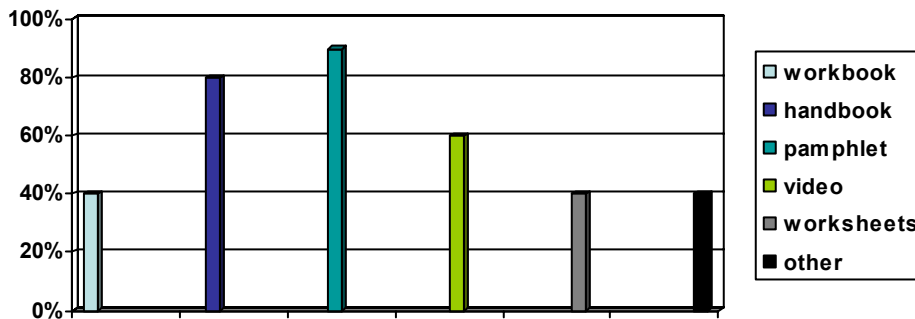
**Question 4: How is the ACS training program conducted?**

This question was to see how the training was conducted. The respondents were able to check all that applied for the question. One of the respondents that answered other; felt that the program was conducted at the ACS Conference. Another respondent felt that the training was focused by the experience of the volunteers in the program. One-hundred percent felt that it was instructor based; ninety percent felt that it was hands-on, and four percent felt that there were other instructional methods used, and one percent felt it was computer-based.



**Question 5: What materials were used in the training program?**

This question dealt with the specific materials used during the training program that the volunteer participated in; the question allowed the volunteers to choose all that applied. The respondents who answered “other” gave the following answers: other materials used in the training were coaching, discussion groups, and also breakouts. Forty percent chose the workbook, eight percent chose handbook, ninety percent felt that the pamphlet was utilized, sixty percent used the video, and forty percent chose the worksheets and other.



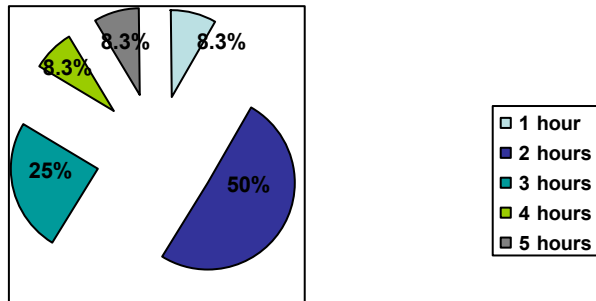
**Question 6: Did you find the materials helpful in the training?**

This question provided an opportunity for the volunteers to give their opinion on the materials that were used in the training, and whether or not they were useful. A total of one-hundred percent of the sample felt that the materials were helpful.

Yes	No
100%	0%

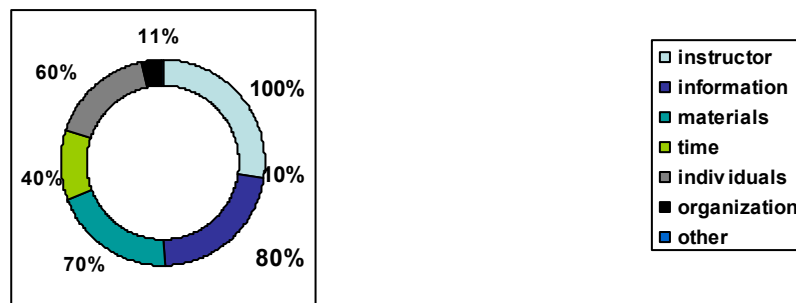
**Question 7: What was the time frame of the training session?**

This question focused on the time length of the training program. Fifty percent felt that the training was two hours, twenty-five percent felt it was three hours, and eight and a third percent felt it was one hour, four hours, and five hours in length.



**Question 8: What did you like about the volunteer training program?**

This question gave an opportunity to the volunteers to distinguish the areas that they liked about the program, and they were also able to choose all that applied to them. The respondent who answered “other” provided a discussion as an answer. One-hundred percent liked the instructor, eighty percent enjoyed the information, seventy percent chose the materials, forty percent chose time frame, sixty percent chose individuals, and eleven percent chose the organization itself.



**Question 9: What did you not like about the volunteer training program?**

This question gave an opportunity to the volunteers to provide the areas in which they least liked about the training program, they were also able to choose all that applied to them. The data below illustrates that only two individuals answered this question; therefore, this question shows that the volunteers who have participated in the American Cancer Society training program have liked how it was conducted. One respondent felt that the training was too long and the other felt that they did not like the individuals involved in the training.

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Instructor	n/a	0%
Information	n/a	0%
Materials	n/a	0%
Time	Too long	10%
Individuals	Some	10%
Organization	n/a	0%
Other	n/a	0%

**Question 10: Did you feel the training was worth while as a new volunteer?**

This question gave the volunteer an opportunity to give his/her opinion of the volunteer training program, and whether it was worthwhile for them to attend. A total of one-hundred percent of the sample felt that the training was worthwhile.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>

The following chapter will illustrate the summary, conclusion, and recommendations for the American Cancer Society Regional Office. The chapter will utilize the survey results to provide ample data to assist in illustrating the importance of the training program as it exists now, and also improvements that could possibly be made to make it an even stronger program for all of the volunteers.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Through the various amount of research for this study each of the research objectives were met. By reviewing the history of the volunteer training program it provided the researcher with information on the procedures used to implement the program. The literature review provided the important data to help back up the importance of the research study. The examination of the quantitative studies performed by using the two survey instruments provided critical information from both the American Cancer Society employees and also the American Cancer Society volunteers on their viewpoints about the program. The respondents' data assisted in determining the conclusion and also the recommendations of this study.

### **Summary**

The American Cancer Society training program may not be adequately given to every volunteer that participates in an event at the American Cancer Society. The American Cancer Society employees will need to develop a training strategy to better meet all of the volunteers that participate in their events. The American Cancer Society employees will also need to identify the training program upfront to all of the volunteers so they all have an understanding of what the training exactly is. The cost effectiveness of all of the training programs that are provided is a concern that needs to be addressed.

The purpose of the study was to gather the necessary data needed to determine the overall perception and effectiveness of the training program for the American Cancer Society Regional Office. The goal for the research study was to meet the following research objectives:

1. Assess the training program by the participants.



2. Assess the training program by the employees.
3. Identify the problems within the training encountered by American Cancer Society employees.
4. Identify the training needs of the program.

A review of literature was performed to illustrate the importance of the study and following the literature review, there were two survey instruments designed to focus individually on both the employees and also the volunteers. The surveys data assisted in determining the cost effectiveness, materials used, time length of the program, teaching style, information obtained, likes and dislikes of the program, and if it was beneficial for all parties involved.

The employee survey was distributed to ten employees at a luncheon and a total of ten responded. The volunteer survey was distributed in the mail service to thirty volunteers throughout the area and a total of twenty responded.

### **Conclusions**

The American Cancer Society Regional Office has been a part of the community for over twenty years, and as a non-profit organization, thrives on the various fundraising events that are implemented throughout the year. With these events come the volunteers who give up their free time to make these events successful. Some of the volunteers are cancer patients, some have lost loved ones from the disease, and others just feel that it is a great cause. Whatever the reason for these individuals to take part in these activities, the American Cancer Society employees couldn't perform these events as successfully with all of the volunteers that are involved. Therefore, the volunteers are an important part of the non-profit organization, and the American Cancer Society employees want to

continue to make the volunteer program successful. With that, the American Cancer Society employees strives on reviewing areas in which may need to be altered in areas that would help benefit the volunteers and also the organization.

### **Major Findings**

#### **Employee Survey Instrument**

1. The ten employee respondents who voluntarily took the survey all either work with the volunteers on a daily basis or sometimes work with the volunteers.
2. The employees all conducted the volunteer training program by instructor-based, hands-on, and also computer based. Therefore, the training programs are consistent in the teaching technique used for each volunteer who participated in the program.
3. The employee respondents had various opinions on the materials that were used for the training programs. The only material that all the respondents agreed upon was the workbooks. Otherwise, materials such as: handbooks, pamphlets, videos, and worksheets all were chosen but not all employees have used each of the materials during the training programs.
4. The employee respondents felt that the materials used were updated yearly; however, two respondents felt that they were either changed every six months or every two years.
5. Eight respondents focused on a timeframe of one hour for the training program, and two respondents felt that the timeframe of the training program to be four hours or more.

6. The employee respondents have a clear understanding of the length of days the training program is implemented, depending on the event.
7. The respondents felt that the volunteer training program was beneficial to the organization, however, that the cost effectiveness is an area that may need to be addressed.
8. The employee respondents are interested in gaining suggestions for their training programs.

### **Major Findings**

#### **Volunteer Survey Instrument**

1. Of the twenty respondents, there were a total of eight volunteer respondents that either did not participate in the training program or they did not think that they had participated in the training.
2. The volunteer respondents all chose the following answers for how the training was conducted: instructor-based, hands-on, and by experience.
3. The respondents felt that the following materials were used during the training: workbook, handbook, pamphlet, video, worksheets, and coaching.
4. All of the volunteer respondents felt that the materials used were helpful in the training.
5. The majority of the respondents attended a two-hour training, while others had attended a one-hour, three-hour, four-hour, or even five-hour training.
6. The respondents chose several answers of what they liked about the training. Some included: instructor, information, time, individuals, and organization.

7. The two respondents who responded to their dislikes provided answers of: the time of the training was too long, and also some of the individuals involved.
8. All of the volunteer respondents felt that the volunteer training was worthwhile.
9. The respondents overall enjoyed the training and also enjoy being a part of the organization.

### **Recommendations**

The conclusions of this study are based upon the results of the findings taken from the volunteer and also the employee survey instruments. The research objectives were the significance of the study. The following questions were of great importance to determining and meeting the objectives.

#### **Objective 1: Assess the training program by the participants.**

##### ***Have you received the ACS training for volunteers?***

The results indicated that 60% of the respondents have received the training, and 40% of the volunteers have not received the training and some did not think that they had. Therefore, there is a discrepancy on whether the volunteers are being told what they are participating in.

##### ***Did you find the materials used helpful in the training?***

The results displayed that there was a total of 100% of the respondents who felt that the materials were helpful.

##### ***What did you like about the volunteer training program?***

The results of the respondents' answers showed that they enjoyed all of the aspects within the program from the instructor to the organization itself.

***What did you dislike about the volunteer training program?***

The results of the survey clearly indicated that there were only two respondents who even chose to answer the question and provided the answers of being too long of a time, and also some of the individuals that were involved in the training program.

***Did you feel the training was worthwhile?***

Based on the results of the survey, the volunteers clearly displayed a 100% of responses with all answering yes. The volunteer responses identify that the volunteer program is beneficial.

**Objective 2: Assess the training program by the employees.**

***How is the ACS training program conducted?***

The employee respondents chose several answers that they felt was used as a teaching technique for the training.

***What materials are used for training the ACS volunteers?***

The survey results show that the employees use various materials within the training program that they may conduct.

**Objective 3: Identify the problems within the training encountered by American Cancer Society employees.**

***What is the time frame of each training session?***

The respondents felt that the training was either for one-hour or for four hours. Therefore, there is a discrepancy in the answers and also possibly in the time frame that each employee conducts a training session.

***Do you feel the training sessions for the volunteers are cost effective?***

The results of the survey indicate that there are several employees that feel the training programs are not cost effective, and that it should be addressed.

**Objective 4: Identify the training needs for the program.**

1. By using the survey findings, the results show that the training program may need to be clearly identified by the American Cancer Society employees to the volunteers, due to the fact that several volunteers may not have understood what they were participating in.
2. The American Cancer Society employees need to set up a general schedule for the training program so they are each constituent with each trainer.
3. As a way to stay in tune with each employee and their training program, there could be a meeting prior to major events to discuss the efforts that will go into each training.
4. Some of the volunteers have been a part of the organization for over twenty years, and therefore, may not feel up-to-date with certain information; determine a questionnaire in determining which volunteers would like additional training.
5. The cost effectiveness of the training is something that instead of having a large amount of training sessions, there could be a calendar which displays the times that a volunteer could be trained.

### **Recommendations for Future Study**

1. The sample size for the volunteer survey could be larger and addressed to additional Regions within Wisconsin.
2. For further study, there could be a comparison between the management team within the entire organization of the American Cancer Society compared to the employees and volunteers.
3. For future study and increased data, the American Cancer Society employees could distribute a survey immediately following the training session. The volunteers would have a clear understanding of what they participated in and then they could provide their viewpoints immediately.
4. For increased data, a researcher could attend a training session to determine comparisons amongst each American Cancer Society employee's training program.

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## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX A- Cover Letter



April 14, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a University of Wisconsin-Stout Graduate student working on my thesis for the Training and Development Master's Program. The topic I have chosen is the overall perception of the American Cancer Society's training program. I participated in an internship at the American Cancer Society this past summer, and directly worked with the training manual, therefore I am interested in the success of the training program for everyone involved.

The attached, voluntary survey contains various questions that will enable the necessary feedback that I need to make proper conclusions and suggestions on the current training program. Your answers are completely confidential. Please return the survey with the self-addressed stamped envelope by **April 18, 2003**. Your feedback is of great importance.

NOTE: If you have any questions or concerns about the research study should be addressed to Sherri Quilling, the researcher at (715)-832-2637, or Dr. Carol Mooney, Professor of Communications, Education and Training at (715)-232-1444. Questions about the rights of research subjects can be addressed to Sue Foxwell, Human Protections Administrator, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, 11 Harvey Hall, Menomonie, WI 54751, (715) 232-1126.

I greatly appreciate your assistance!

Sincerely,

*Sherri L. Quilling*

Sherri L. Quilling

University of Wisconsin-Stout Graduate Student

**APPENDIX B- ACS Employee Survey**  
**PAGE 1**

***All of your answers will be completely confidential!***

***Directions: Please read the following questions carefully and answer to the best of your ability. Thank you!***

1. Gender

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ Male
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ Female

2. How long have you been an employee at ACS?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ 1-3 years
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ 4-6 years
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ 7-10 years
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ 11-15
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ 16+ years

3. Do you train ACS volunteers?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ yes
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ no
- C. If not, why not?

4. How often do you work with ACS volunteers?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ daily
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ seldom
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ not at all

5. How is the ACS training program conducted? Please check all that apply.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ instructor based
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ computerized system
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ hands-on training
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

6. What materials are used for training the ACS volunteers? Please check all that apply.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ workbook
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ handbook
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ pamphlet
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ video
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ worksheets
- F. \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

7. How often are the training materials updated?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ every 6 months
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ every year

**ACS Employee Survey**  
**PAGE 2**

- C. \_\_\_\_\_ every 2 years
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ every 3 years
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ 4+ years

8. What is the time frame of each training session?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 hour
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ 2 hours
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 hours
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ 4+ hours

9. How long is the training program for new volunteers?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 day
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ 2 days
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 days
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ 4 days
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you feel the training sessions for the volunteers are cost effective?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ yes
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ no

***Thank you for taking the time to fill out the survey! I greatly appreciate your efforts! This information will be used as a research tool to gain further insight and continuous improvement of the volunteer training program. Please place the survey in the envelope provided at Gayle Mittelstadt's desk. Have a great day!***

***Sincerely,  
Sherri Quilling  
University of Wisconsin-Stout Researcher***

**APPENDIX C- ACS Volunteer Survey**  
**PAGE 1**

***All of your answers will be completely confidential!***

***Directions: Please read the following questions carefully and answer to the best of your ability. Thank you!***

1. Gender

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ Male
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ Female

2. How long have you been a volunteer for the ACS?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ 1-3 years
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ 4-6 years
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ 7-10 years
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ 11-15
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ 16+ years

3. Have you received the ACS training for volunteers?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ yes
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ no

**\*\*\* If you answered no to #3 you can stop here! Thank you!**

4. How is the ACS training program conducted? Please check all that apply.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ instructor based
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ computerized system
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_ hands-on training
  - D. \_\_\_\_\_ other
- 

5. What materials were used for the training? Please check all that apply.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ workbook
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ handbook
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_ pamphlet
  - D. \_\_\_\_\_ video
  - E. \_\_\_\_\_ worksheets
  - F. \_\_\_\_\_ other
- 

6. Did you find the materials helpful in the training?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ yes
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ no

**ACS Volunteer Survey**  
**PAGE 2**

7. How long was the training session that you participated in?
- A. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 hour
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ 2 hours
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 hours
  - D. \_\_\_\_\_ 4 hours
  - E. \_\_\_\_\_ 5+ hours
8. What did you like about the volunteer training program? Please check all that apply.
- A. \_\_\_\_\_ instructor
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ information provided
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_ materials used
  - D. \_\_\_\_\_ time of training
  - E. \_\_\_\_\_ individuals involved
  - F. \_\_\_\_\_ organization
  - G. \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_
9. What did you not like about the volunteer training program? Please check all that apply.
- A. \_\_\_\_\_ instructor
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ information provided
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_ materials used
  - D. \_\_\_\_\_ time of training
  - E. \_\_\_\_\_ individuals involved
  - F. \_\_\_\_\_ organization
  - G. \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_
- 
10. Did you feel the training was worth while as a new volunteer?
- A. \_\_\_\_\_ yes
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ no

***Thank you for taking the time to fill out the survey! I greatly appreciate your efforts! This information will be used as a tool for as I complete my graduate research study.***

***Please place the survey in the self- addressed, stamped envelope and return to me by April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003.***

***Sincerely, Sherri Quilling (University of Wisconsin-Stout Researcher)***



