



**BRING IN THE  
BOOMERS!  
THE NEW FACE  
OF VOLUNTEERISM**

**Silver Surge Seniors Conference 2009**

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Poetker**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



**Kerby Centre**

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***AND PASSIONATE  
INDIVIDUALS ON CALL TO  
BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL  
CAPACITY BY SERVING AS  
CONSULTANTS, STRATEGISTS,  
MARKETING GURUS,  
AMBASSADORS, INNOVATORS,  
MENTORS, FUND-RAISERS,  
AND DIRECT SERVICE  
TEAMMATES.”***

LORENZ)

(FIXLER, EICHBERG, AND



# OVERVIEW

- Introduction
- What the literature says about the Baby Boomers, particularly re volunteering
- Kerby Centre study
- Group exercise



# INTRODUCTION

- Canadian society is aging –fueled by the baby Boomers.
- First wave of boomers are retiring.
- Boomers have challenged social convention through earlier stages of life.
- Boomers are redefining aging.
- Boomers are not joiners and may not volunteer.



# *WHAT THE LITERATURE SAYS....*

- Who are the Boomers?
- Boomers and Volunteering
- Barriers to their Volunteering
- Recruiting and Sustaining Boomer Volunteers

# WHO ARE THE BOOMERS?

- born 1946 to 1964
- 32 % of Canadian population
- Canadian/U.S. Cohort divisions
- Bibby
  - Pill, Divorce Act

*Canadian Baby Boom... a 'catching-up' ... compensating for low birth rates in economic crisis 1929 to 1939 and then prosperity in post-war years...*

# CHARACTERISTICS OF BOOMERS

- Live longer; healthy longer
- More computer savvy
- Vast social networks
- Work long hours
- Retirement a metamorphosis
- Encore careers

*Four out of five Boomers report that they expect to work past the traditional retirement age of 65 years*



# CHARACTERISTICS OF BOOMERS

- Want to see results
- Lifelong learning opportunities
- Avid consumers
- Bibby study
  - Individualistic
  - Less traditional
  - Shift in thinking
- *Boomers want to feel productive*
- *Boomers are eager to utilize their workplace skills when they volunteer*



# CANADIAN BOOMERS

- Sherry Cooper
- Aging faster
- 2015 more seniors than children
- 2005 – 1/30  
2056 – 1/10
- Median age jump
- *Proportion of working age population*
  - 2005 – 38%
  - 2031 – 41%
  - 2056 – 45%
- *Dependency ratio (over 100 working age people)*
  - 2005 – 44
  - 2031 – 61



# BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING

- remaining at work
- no time
- no one asked
- no interest
- gave \$\$ instead
- unable to make  
long-term  
commitment

*“it’s a fine line  
between  
guilting  
people out and  
appealing to  
their sense of  
giving”*

*...survey  
participant*



“Boomers desire and know how to positively impact a nonprofit’s capacity more significantly than any cohort of volunteers that has preceded them. They are redefining retirement and will demand changes in the very nature of volunteerism.”

...Fixler, Eichberg, and Lorenz 2008



# RECOGNITION AND SUSTAINING BOOMER VOLUNTEERS

## From

- Volunteer management
- Recruitment
- Placement
- Supervision
- Performance review
- Recognition
- retention

## To

- Volunteer engagement
- Cultivation and networking
- Negotiation and agreement
- Support
- Performance measurement
- Acknowledgement
- Sustainability



# SUSTAINING BOOMER VOLUNTEERS

- Flexible opportunities
- Treated as colleagues
- Meaningful and challenging jobs
- Organized and professional agencies
- Advertise jobs that will impact society or make a difference
- Provide honoraria, stipends, coverage for transportation costs, meals
- Effective communication



# COMMUNITY WORKSHOP IN JUNE

- Flexibility
- Share jobs
- Use of current technology
- Recruitment
- Child/adult care for Boomer caregivers
- Create “Boomer-friendly” culture in your organization

*“Adapt or  
perish!  
Remember,  
shift  
happens!!”*





# KERBY CENTRE STUDY

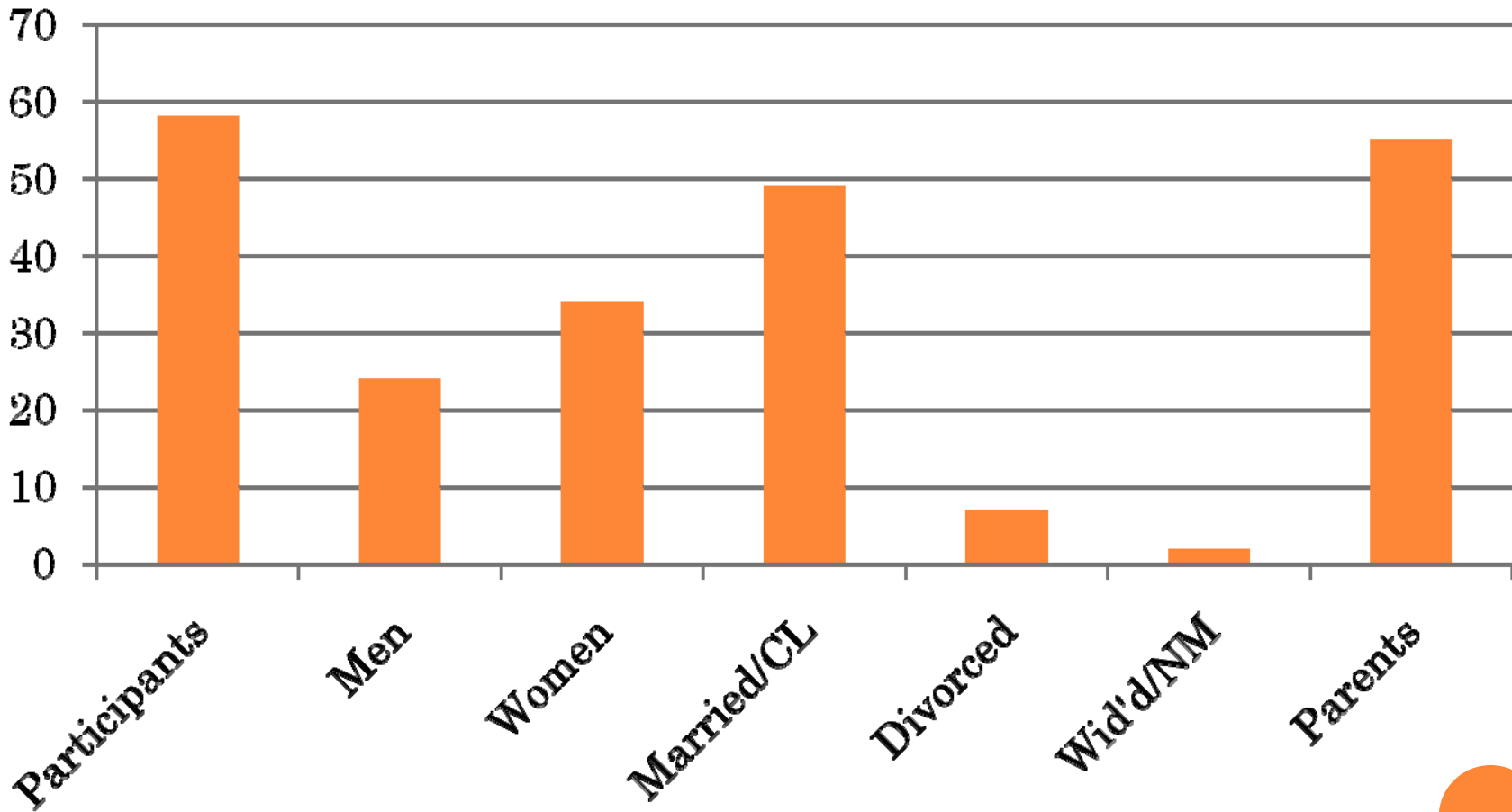
Purpose of Study  
Survey Data  
Calgary Boomer  
suggestions

# *PURPOSE OF STUDY*

- Availability and interest of Boomer volunteers
- Suggest strategies re recruitment, nurturing and retention of Boomer volunteers
- Lend authority from the literature to the Calgary experience
- <http://www.kerbycentre.com>



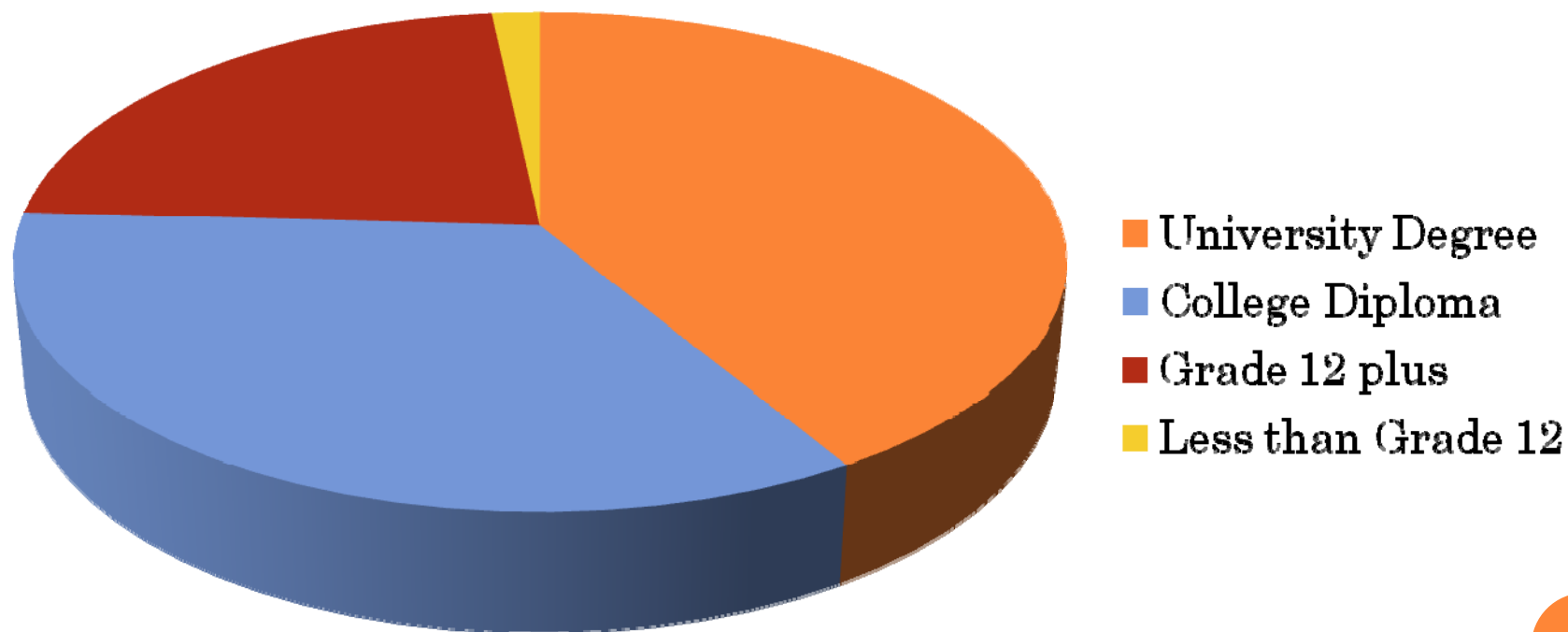
# SURVEY DATA



# SURVEY DATA



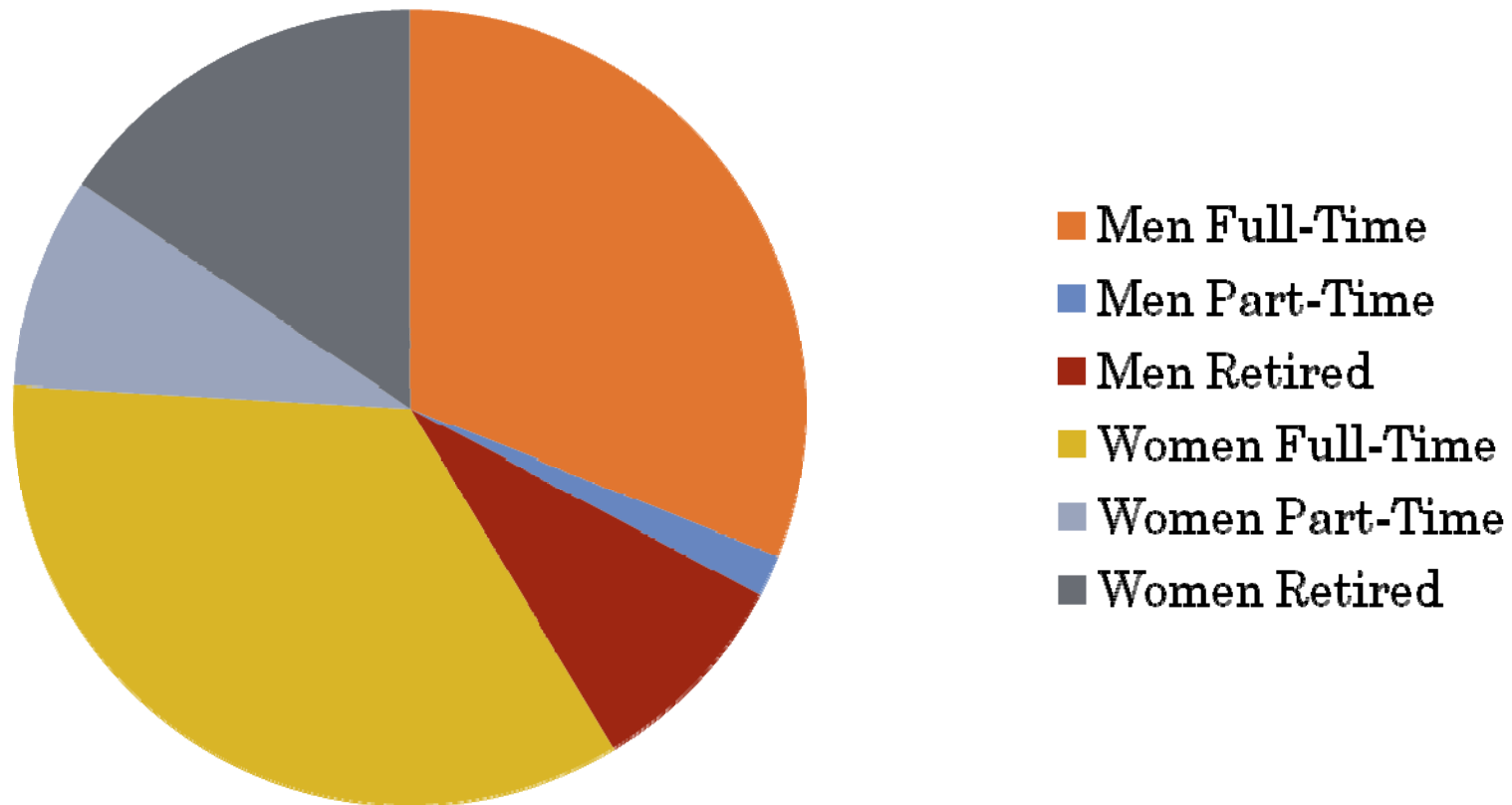
## Level of Education



# SURVEY DATA



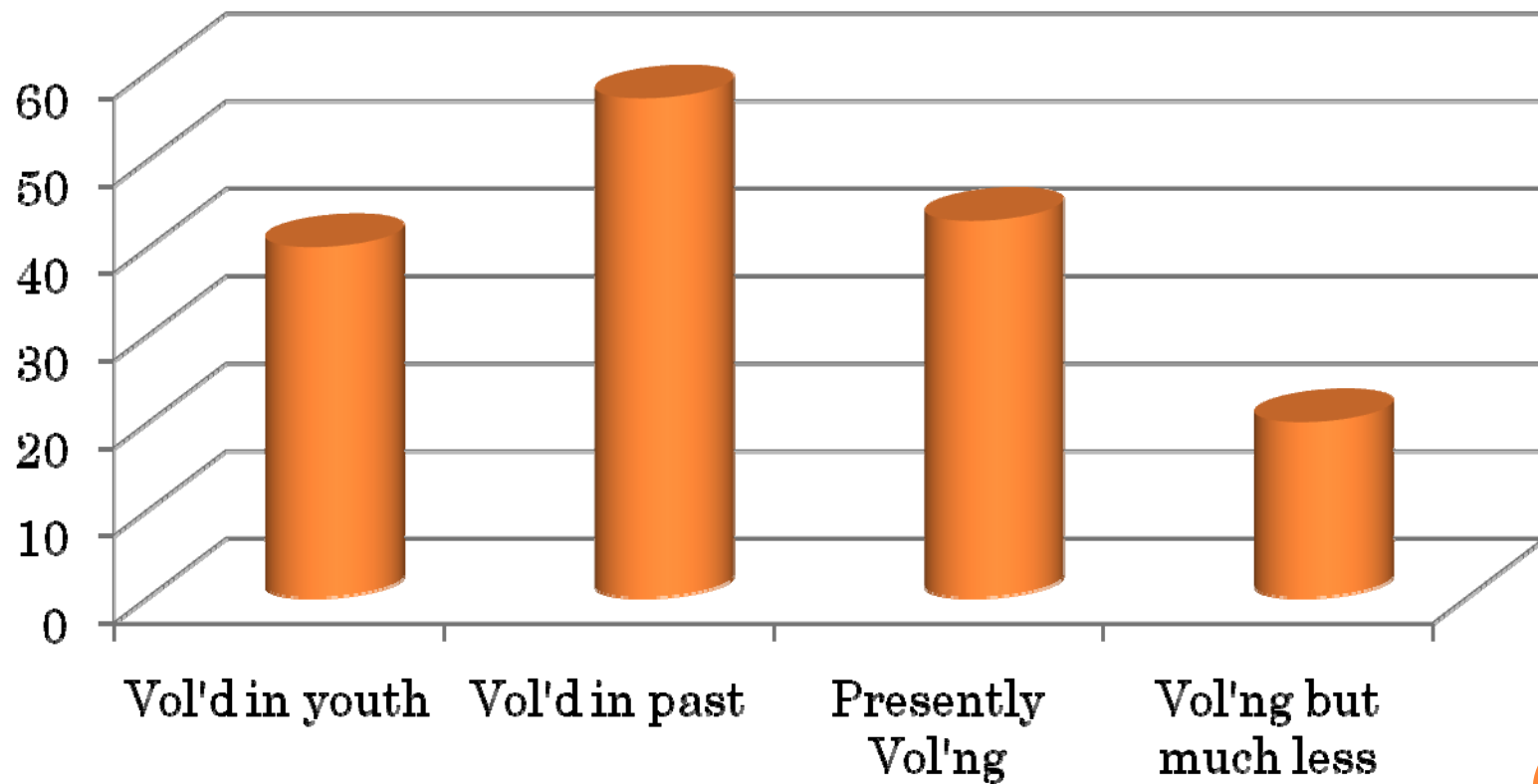
## Present Employment Status





# *SURVEY DATA*

## **Historical and Present Volunteering**



# BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING



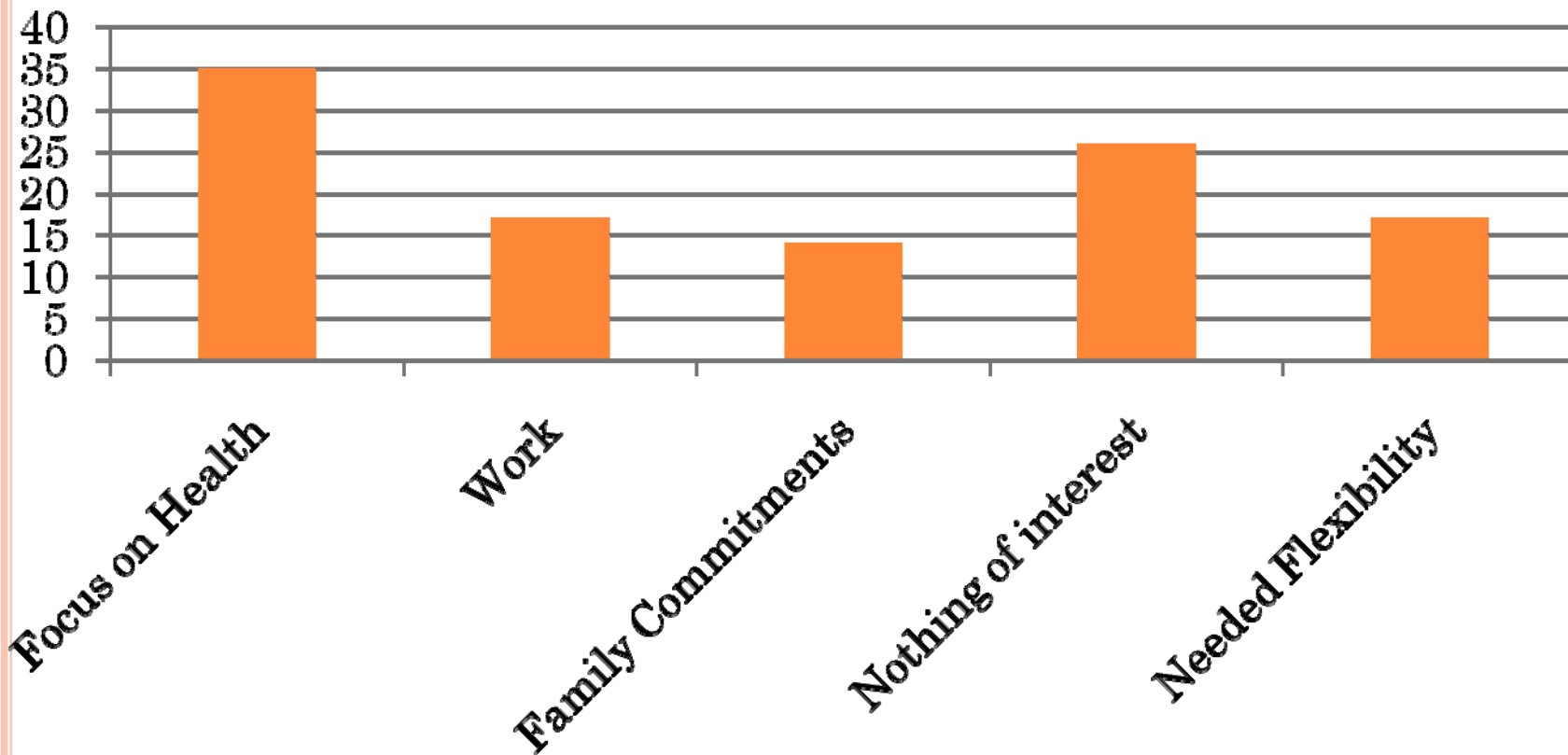
- Time!!! for 78% of the participants
  - 49% - past barrier
  - 20% - present barrier
  - 31% - past and present barrier



# BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING



**Reasons for Not Volunteering(%)**

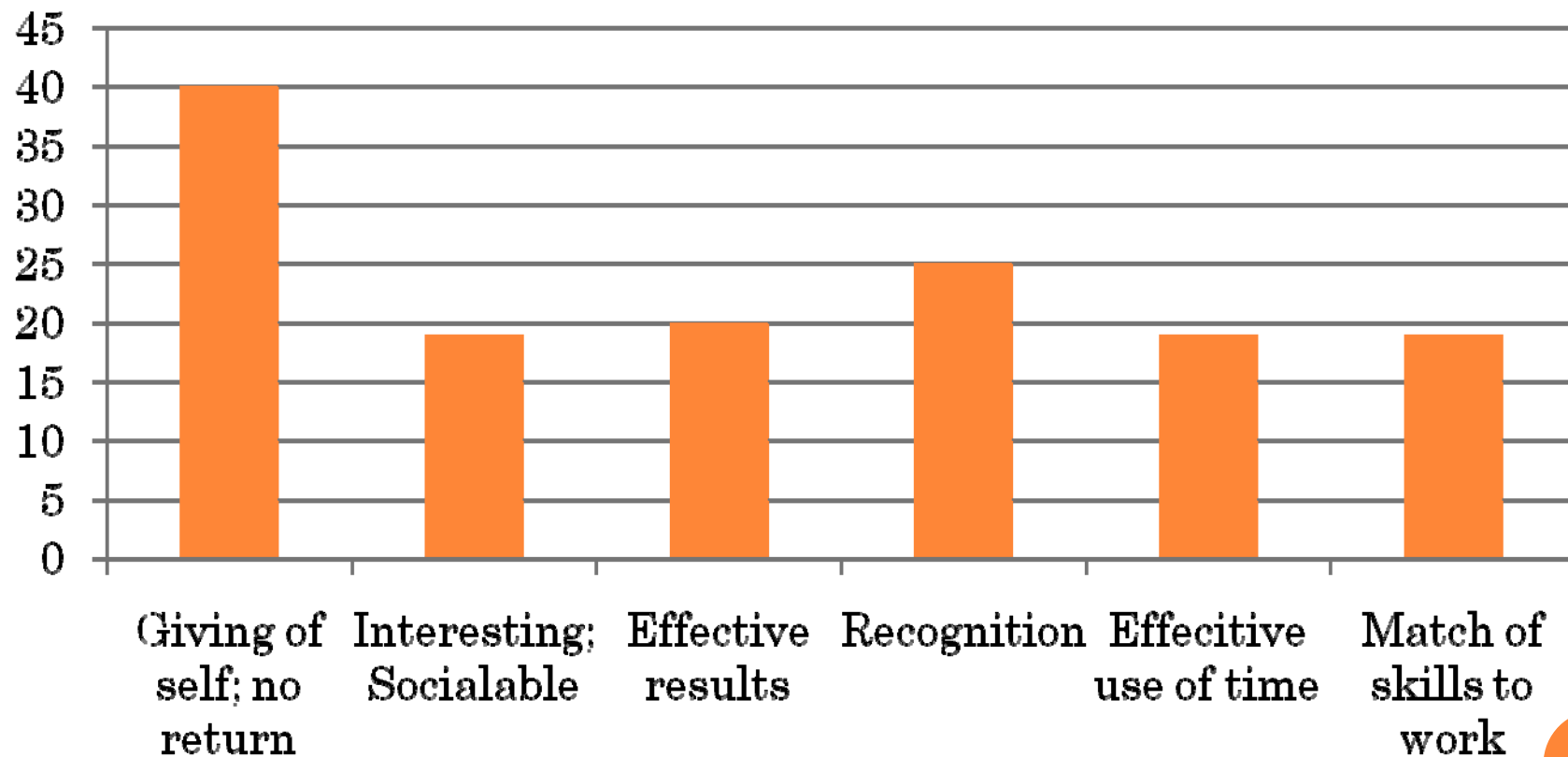


# EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERING



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## Common Responses



# PARTICIPANT COMMENTS



- Volunteering is an “act of stewardship”
- “...are two kinds of volunteering – to further own agenda or [it’s sincerely] philanthropic”
- “cooperation rather than competition between organizations for resources to do the same work ... resources should be shared”



# SUGGESTIONS FOR RECRUITERS



- Use words like “fun”, “team”, “friends”, “flexibility”, “projects”
- Provide a clear, concise understanding of the agency/organization
- Realistic and clear understanding of job
- Ensure they will make a difference
- Offer opportunities to “learn new skills”, “personal growth while benefitting others”
- listen to them...given the experiences and skills they bring



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*“Almost every survey of Boomers and nonprofits reveals that large numbers of nonprofit leaders believe their organizations are ready to engage Boomers...”*





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**...and equally large numbers of Boomers say that nonprofits are operating in ways that discourage them from volunteering.”**

Fixler, Eichberg and Lorenz

