

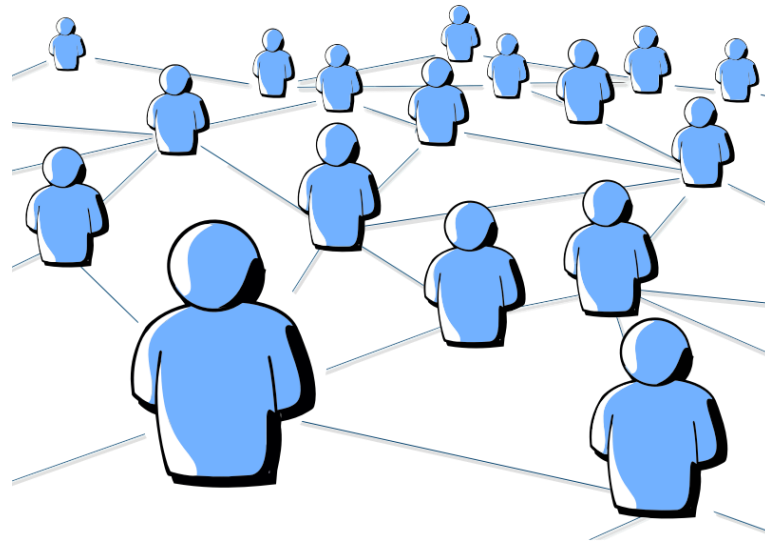
“Our strength is our people”
Examining volunteer social capital
for community sport and recreation

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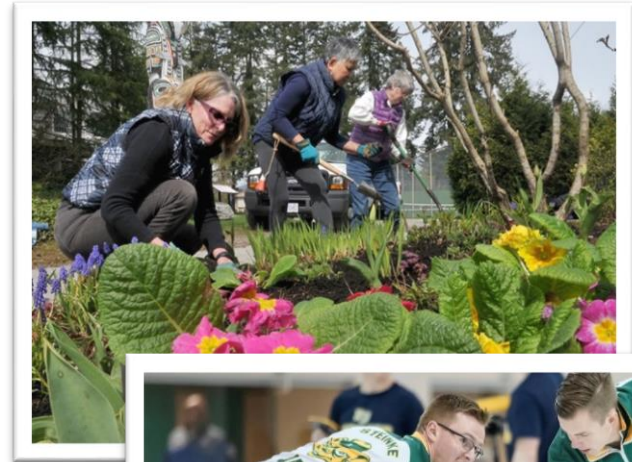
Social Capital

- Trust, reciprocity, shared understanding generated in a social connection over time – ‘social energy’
(Bourdieu, 1986)



Social Capital

- Sport and recreation participants develop connections they can leverage elsewhere, and a sense of citizenship/civic engagement in their broader community (Darcy et al., 2014; Glover et al., 2005; Mair, 2009; Tonts, 2005; Van Ingen & Van Eijk, 2009)



Volunteer Social Capital

- Social capital may be a critical resource for sport and recreation **volunteers** and their **organizations** (Lin, 2001; Payne et al., 2011)



A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015

Pathways to Wellbeing



Research Project

- What social capital exists among community sport and recreation volunteers?
- How is that social capital developed?
- What difference does it make to the volunteers, their task groups, and the organization as a whole?



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Volunteer Social Capital for Community Sport and Recreation

- Phase 1 – interviews with 30 volunteer board members and coaches; “describe your connection with other club volunteers”
- Phase 2 – survey of 127 coaches and board members, measuring social capital and related factors
- Phase 3 – survey of board members of 42 clubs to examine social capital within the board
- Phase 4 – case studies of the network of volunteers and social capital within nonprofit community sport and arts organizations

Social capital IS evident among volunteers



“relational” (trust, mutual respect, give-and-take) *strong

“I know that he would be receptive to any problems I have and will make every effort to help me”

“I feel she respects me”



“cognitive” (shared understanding, exchange of ideas) *strong

“We were able to sort of look at each other and think ‘that may be good [for] them but bad for us’”



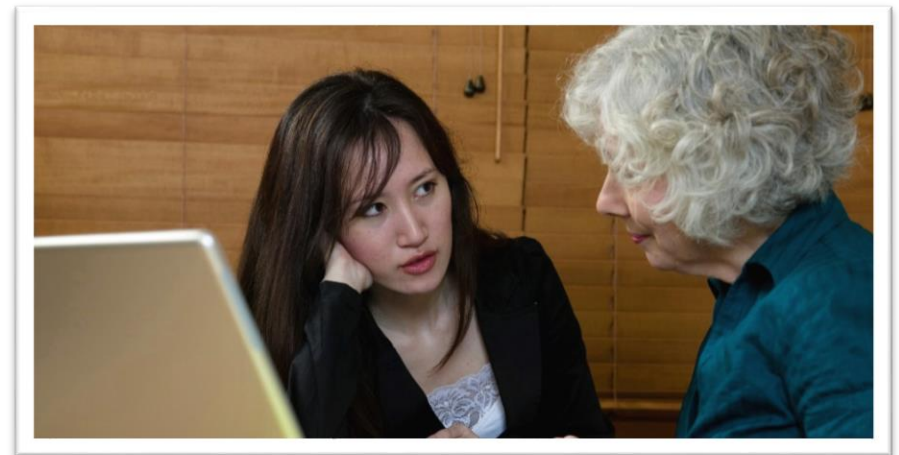
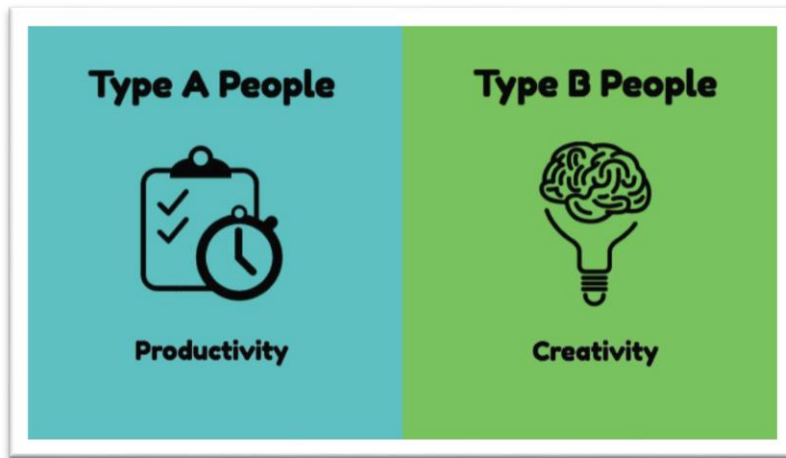
“structural” (access to resources through others) *limited

“He’s got a very strong background and connectedness with [sport] in the city... he knows a lot of people... I wouldn’t have known [about outside things] without him”

Volunteer Social Capital for Community Sport and Recreation

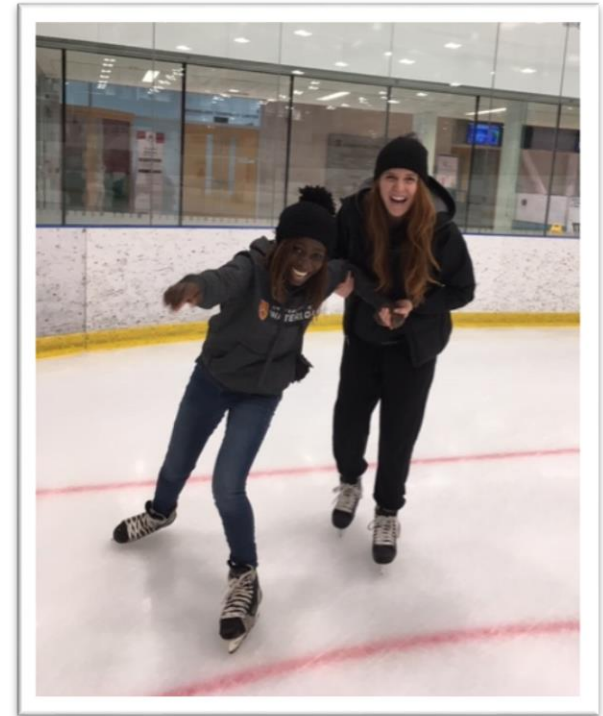
Social capital is generated in “bonding” and “bridging” connections:

- Similar/different personalities, work style, lifestyle



Social capital is more likely to develop when:

- Volunteers interact at least weekly
- Volunteers bring valued human capital to the connection
 - Particular valued skills (organizational, first aid, technical/design, financial)
 - Knowledge/experience with the activity/organization
 - Ideas
 - Energy, enthusiasm



Social Capital Makes a Difference!

- Relational/cognitive social capital (trust, mutual respect, exchange of ideas, shared understanding) is:
 - Satisfying and motivating for volunteers
 - Contributes to sense of efficiency and effectiveness in their roles



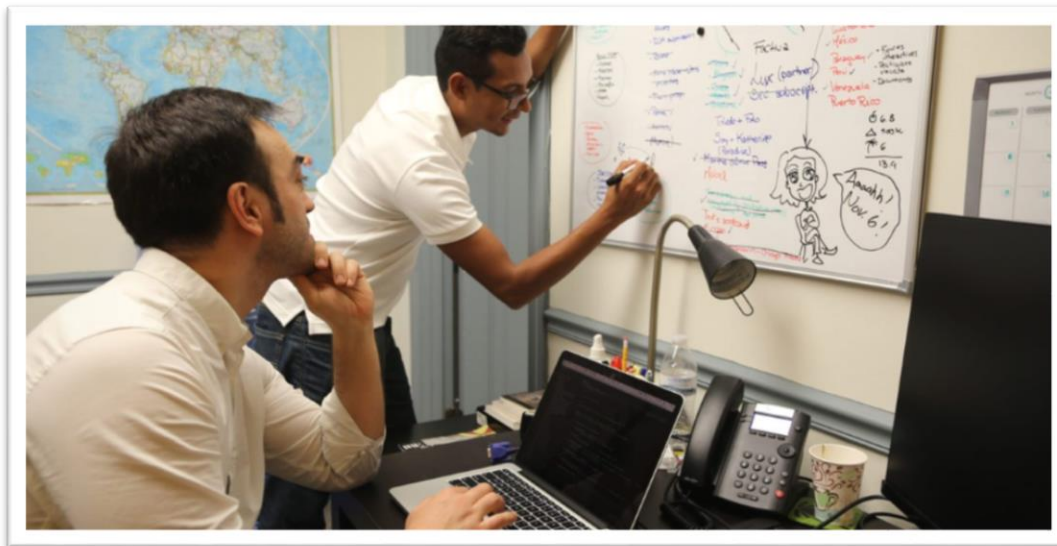
Social Capital Makes a Difference!

- Structural capital (access to resources and information through others) is most impactful to board performance
- Social energy is perceived to be vital to a well-functioning club

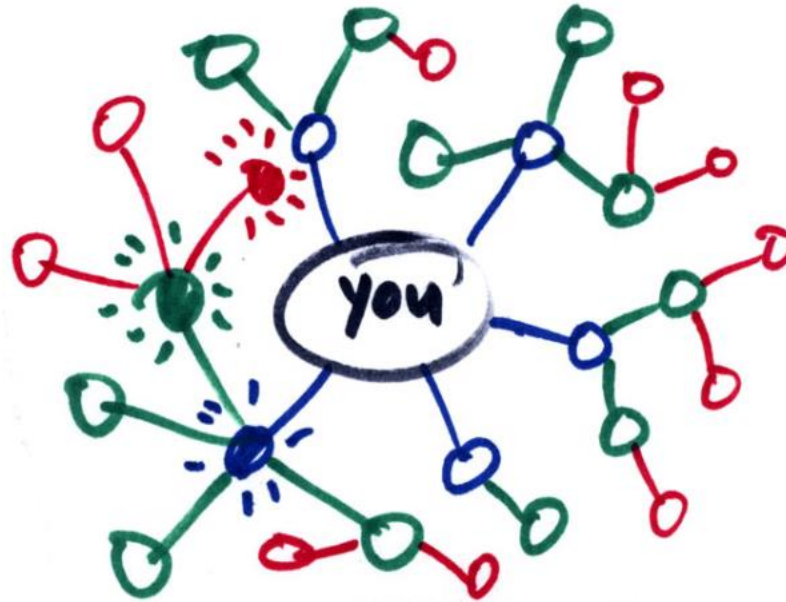


Volunteer Social Capital for Community Sport and Recreation

- Not all connections between volunteers generate social capital; some are “just work”



Implications and Group Discussion



Assessing - Building – Managing
volunteer social capital



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