

Fundamentals of English Writing

Argumentative Essay Example (W13)

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Chamber Volunteers

By Jane Smith

My first volunteer experience was when I joined the Burnes County Junior Woman's Club twenty-five years ago. Since that time I have become so involved in this activity that a group of my friends has called me a professional volunteer. According to my husband, John, this is defined as any job that offers no pay, demands lots of time, and requires the donation of supplies from our office. Over the years, I have learned a great deal about the different types of people who work in volunteer organizations. Although most organizations consist of similar types of members, as president of the Burnes County Chamber of Commerce, I have observed that the chamber has a unique membership because these people are representing their businesses, industries, and professions. Therefore, they have distinct motives for offering their time and talents. The majority of these volunteers can be divided into three main categories: the bossy executives, the glory seekers, and the backbones.


The bossy executives are always right. If you don't believe it, just ask them! They have grand ideas and are very willing to tell you how to carry them out. The problem is they expect everyone else to do all the work. When someone else comes up with a different idea, they bossy executives will discuss only its negative aspects even if the idea is much better than theirs. If the committee decides to proceed with the new idea, the executives will still do it their way. No matter what the outcome of a project is, you can be sure of one thing: If anything goes wrong, it is not the bossy executives' faults because they are always right.

Unlike the bossy executives who like to be heard and obeyed, the glory seekers participate so that they can be seen. They are the first ones to volunteer for a project that is high profile and involves a lot of free publicity. If they happen to think of a good idea, everyone will know because they will be sure to take all of the credit. However, if anything goes wrong, they react like the bossy executives and are never at fault. When the time comes to begin working, they somehow feel that their presence is not necessary. They leave all of the planning and activities to the third type of volunteers, the backbones.

In any committee, if you can have at least one backbone, you can be sure that the work will be done because the backbones believe that actions speak louder than words. Whether these backbones are chairing committees or are members of the team, you know that they will follow through with their responsibilities and pitch in to complete the unfinished tasks of the bossy executives and the glory seekers. Their only motivation is the satisfaction they receive from supporting the organization, and their aim is to follow through and complete every project. When the cameras are flashing and the credits are given, the backbones are content to take the pictures and give the credits to the other team members.

Even though the backbones are the ideal chamber members, the bossy executives and the glory seekers do contribute in their own special ways to the goal of the Burnes County Chamber of Commerce. That goal is to deal with issues that affect the economic well-being of our community, and, through the unified effort of everyone, this goal continues to be achieved.

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