

***" The Salvation Army- Non-Profit Faith Based Organization"***

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Generalist Practice with Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Organizational Assessment

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The Salvation Army's evangelism and social action services began in East London, England, in 1865 by Methodist minister William Booth and his wife, Catherine. The Booths' desire to share the gospel took shape amidst a city ridden with poverty and despair. They quickly set aside their conventional church methods to meet the people where they lived on the streets. Their socially conscious work was aggressive and innovative, venturing where few churches were willing or able. The Salvation Army has a long history of providing services to adults in Greater New York. In 1891, The Salvation Army opened its first men's food and shelter depot in Greenwich Village, and an equally large shelter for women, The Daybreak, opened in the Bowery. The Army's adult programs have grown and developed from these two facilities to meet changing needs in over sixty locations in the Greater New York area. They are known as a Christian Faith based organization. An international movement and is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible., Its ministry is motivated by the love of God., Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination. Like the Army, the Salvation Army has a ranking system to distinguish its ministry employees. Ranking starts from soldiers (person who has accepted Jesus Christ as their savior) to Major (A pastor of 15 more years).

The administrative structure and management style fits the mission and services of the organization. The organization has transparent and structural lines/systems for decision-making. This is done through the board of directors and the territorial headquarters management team. The roles of those in charge of decision-making are straightforward and involve broad participation that is practical and appropriate. Decisions are made by taking significant steps to ensure they are best for the organization. Many different program evaluations and surveys are put in place to measure the organization's performance and progress continually. Through these

assessments, it is determined if the programs are well-defined and align with the mission of the organization as well as the needs of the clients. Sometimes, this assessment may not be in the employees' best interest as long days are implemented, caseloads are not evenly distributed, and self-care needs to be promoted. The organization works for the clients and does very little advocating for the employees causing employees to experience burnout.

The community's needs determine program structure, programs, and services as not all Salvation Army's have the same programs, and not all communities have the exact needs. New ideas are continually offered to meet the service gaps in their outreach area. Systems to collect data about openings are put into place by the development department to collect data to determine community-wide needs. Once a need is identified, resources are sought to acquire funds, staffing, and volunteers to execute the needs. All programs and services established reflect evidence-based practice. During the initial start of the programs and services, an evaluation is conducted, examined, and linked to systematic improvements. This is to ensure that the program is serving its purpose and that those receiving the services are satisfied—continual monitoring and assessment of the structure, process, and program on an ongoing basis.

The Salvation Army programs are designed to assist vulnerable adults, families, and children in community centers, homeless shelters, and outreach programs; soup kitchens, food pantries, mobile street feeding; foster care, group homes, and adoption services; residences and programs for the developmentally disabled; AIDS casework centers; employment training and many other programs. (About Us - Salvation Army Greater New York Division, n.d.) Through funding from various cooperating partners, The Salvation Army can operate and assist those in need in local neighborhoods, and partners such as Google, Walmart, Lowes, Toyota, UPS, Ford, and AT&T donate millions of dollars annually. Through these donations, the Salvation Army can

keep its doors open. They are also known for its Red Kettle fundraising efforts; when you think of the Salvation Army, the first thing that comes to mind is the Red Kettle during Christmas. The Red Kettle effort is a form of substantial revenue to raise funds. The funds raised through these fundraisers are used to operate social service programs. Funding seems sufficient, comes from diverse sources, and fits the mission's mission. The funding sources available can be utilized by searching for the organization's homepage and through the Intranet program put in place so that funders can see where the funds are being spent. A regular communication and reporting system is utilized to cultivate potential new funders as ideas for revenue diversification are continually considered. Board members embrace the fundraising strategies and are constantly revising the feedback from the current funders. Input is sought and considered for other fundraising strategies that can be utilized for future events.

Organizational culture is an essential part of social service and The Salvation Army. Communication carries a consistent and powerful message to donors and clients. When you first approach the organization's building, you will notice the red shield at the entrance and the Holy Cross at the top of the establishment; these physical infrastructures enhance the message of love and compassion. Once you enter the establishment, you will notice the professional marketing material in the front entrance reading sections: these are used constantly and are always current. This is how the organization advertises the need for volunteers and organizers. All materials offered are in multiple languages and reflect diversity to reach advocacy to various ethnic groups. Most volunteers come from the community, religious organizations, or college students interning within the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army has a robust organizational culture with strict guidelines. The Mission and Culture Department seeks to identify and articulate with biblical, theological, and historical discernment the critical issues arising from the intersections

of the gospel, Army, and culture to promote the formation of skilled Salvationist change agents for this mission field- through wisdom gathering, theological dialogue, event planning, resource development, shared strategizing, and the encouragement of systems of care for all. (Mission and Culture: The Salvation Army, n.d.) Informal expectations are clearly articulated and supported by staff. In keeping with the organization's culture, the Salvation Army urges its staff members to reach their full potential and has resources devoted to continuing staff education. To obtain these funds, employees must qualify and follow specific guidelines. The funds are an excellent resource for employees like me who have decided to continue their education and can take advantage of them. (Watson & Brown, 2001)

Recently after the COVID-19 pandemic, Salvation found intriguing new ways to keep volunteer recruitment going. They created a database that allowed volunteers to register electronically and list vacancies within the organization. This form of recruitment is accepted by the various communities they serve. As the use of technology grows, they try to keep up with the times and modernize how they recruit volunteers. Volunteers are an essential part of the organization as they would only be able to do some of what they do with volunteers.

Recruitment, selection, orientation, training, development, and supervision can be accessed via zoom and teams. In keeping with the needs and adjustments needed during the pandemic, the App Plentiful was adopted by the organization to assist clients in accessing the food pantry electronically. Through this app, clients can make an appointment for the food pantry, roister for many programs such as the Thanksgiving basket and Christmas Angel tree program, and register for rental assistance. Information is also provided online regarding receiving a hot meal from the soup kitchen. Many clients, through this app, have learned that, as clients, they can also

collaborate, take on roles such as volunteering in social service projects, and assist with prepping for both the soup kitchen and the food pantry.

The Salvation Army strives to make positive impacts and build positive relationships with similar and related organizations such as the Food Bank for New York City, City Harvest, The American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, and other organizations. These relationships are built by making their presence known and showing vital leadership roles through collaboration and networking, and reciprocity is sought with these organizations. In many public events, you can view the collaborative efforts of these organizations as together they host farmers' markets, street fairs, health fairs, and other events collaboratively. In addition, strong relationships are made with high-impact political entities and leaders such as congress, councilmen, and various community leaders. As a social service organization, they strive to make policy changes that affect those in underserved communities. The Salvation Army proactively and effectively influences policymaking at the local level and seeks to impact those at the state and national levels.

The Salvation Army mission statement is one of honor in keeping with the culture and upholding its reputation. It is current, accurate, and peculiar to the organization "Salvation Army's mission statement is "to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination." The statement exemplifies the religious inclination of the organization. However, it also indicates that the Salvation Army is out to help people irrespective of who or where they are. This statement is why they exist and advocate for those in impoverished areas where they would be otherwise forgotten as they meet the person where they are.

In conducting my research, I found most of the information via pamphlets, magazines, articles, and books published by the Salvation Army and its members. In addition, I was able to find articles and books published by outside resources that were able to give me an exterior view of the organization's culture as well. Many resources were available in electronic as well as printed form. In addition, I also had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing a Major that the organization has employed for the past 30 years. He has been engaged in different roles throughout his career within the organization. He started at 32 as an ordained pastor and has moved throughout the organization into other positions throughout different Greater New York area divisions.

One of the top strengths of the organization is its ability to serve anyone that comes through its doors with a need. They do not discriminate regardless of age, gender, sexuality, income level, or religion. The Salvation Army is known to advocate for those with the highest needs in society, including those with drug addiction, mental health diagnoses, and clients with criminal records. The Salvation Army directs an ARC, an adult rehab center, to house and employ ex-offenders and addicts. Another strength is their ability to teach God's word in various ways. They are known for having open-air meetings in local parks, sidewalks, alleyways, and just about anywhere there is an open space and an opportunity to minister the word of God. Lastly, The Salvation Army's programs are geared towards children and the youth as they are our future and need guidance in their upbringing. Youth and children's programs aim to keep children and youth off the streets and within programs utilizing their time productively. Many programs seek to teach essential life skills and the word of God through bible study and VBS programs. In addition, they assist academically through their afterschool program and summer camp.

Areas of growth for the organization that I recommend are to keep efforts like surveys and seminars to improve organizational skills. Secondly, they should continue to hire new talent and staff according to the need and changes in the community. Many staff members are veterans and prefer to avoid implementing change. The difference is essential to keep up with societal changes and recruit new employees. They should not do any activity or take any step which makes them politically interfered with in the future, as being affiliated with a particular political group can interfere with how people view the organization and impede any funding or allocations for the future.

## References

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