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Money & Mission

Volume V, Issue 18 - June 17, 2015



Editorial

With this issue, we conclude the fifth volume of **Money & Mission**. Watch for Volume Six commencing in October of this year. And please remember that we love to hear from our readers, particularly on topics you would like to see covered. Write to us at Money&Mission@can.salvationarmy.org.

We wish our readers a pleasant summer. If you are able to take some vacation time, we hope that this will help you to "recharge your batteries" after an unusually busy winter and spring, culminating in the launch of Agresso, our new financial system. Agresso has meant significant change for those of us who are involved in the territory's finances. We know that the transition has brought challenges and, sometimes, frustration with our new processes. However, we also know that we will emerge at the end stronger, more efficient and better able to meet the Army's needs. Thank you for your patience and partnership as we face the future together.

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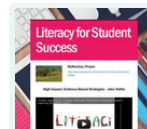
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Finance Department's Customer Service Standards

The creation of the regional accounting centres (RAC) in 1998 brought with it the notion of the Finance department having customers and needing to think in terms of customer service for the first time in its history. Prior to that, we saw ourselves as providing a head office and purely financial function. As a result, we became more sensitive throughout the department to the need for good customer service, and focusing our services on our customers' needs.

In 2010, the department formalized its approach to customer service with the introduction of its Customer Service Standards. This document contains standards for service in such key areas as availability, courtesy, response to queries, quality of information and respect.

Staff are evaluated against these standards in performance appraisals and, to further reinforce the message, we also acknowledge and celebrate excellent customer service through an awards program. Twice each year, our staff submit nominations for other staff in the department whose service has exceeded expectations. A nominations committee reviews the submissions and selects those who are to receive awards.

If you would like to learn more about our program, please write to us at Money&Mission@can.salvationarmy.org.

Tax Receipting: Used Vehicle Donations

This is the latest in our series based on the new "Charity" section 9 in the Territorial Finance Manual (TFM). In this article, we provide guidance on tax receipting for gifts of used vehicles.

Used vehicle donations may be valued at 100% of the wholesale price from the most current Gold Book/Canadian Black Book. If a Gold Book/Canadian Black Book price is not available, an independent appraisal should be obtained.

- Ask the donor to complete the *Used Vehicle Donation Form* (see TFM 0903) prior to making the donation.
- Before viewing the vehicle, the donor must report that the vehicle is:

1. *less than 15 years old*
2. *has less than 200,000 kms*
3. *in good running condition, with a working transmission*
4. *clean with no major damage to the interior*
5. *clean with no major rust or damage to the exterior*
6. *without any major issues or concerns*
7. *without any liens against it (provincial paperwork confirming this must be presented at time of donation)*
8. *owned by the donor (must provide provincial ownership at time of donation)*

- If all of the above is in order, ask the donor to drive the vehicle to the donation location for inspection.
- Inspect the vehicle and confirm all of the above is correct.
- Fill out appropriate paperwork as per provincial registration and bill of sale, leaving the "buyer" section blank (this will be completed when the vehicle is sold).
- Review the donor's photo identification to ensure they are the owner of the vehicle and keep a copy of the photo identification.
- Request that the donor remove all personal contents from the vehicle, including the license plate if provincial legislation requires its removal.
- Retrieve keys from donor and keep locked in safe.
- If the tax receipt is to be issued from a different office, complete a *Request for Official Donation Receipt Form* (see TFM 0903).
- Photocopy the provincial bill of sales and liens paperwork and include for receipt backup.

These steps should be followed even when a receipt is not required. In other words, we should



Canada the 5th Happiest Country?

In April of this year, the *World Happiness Report 2015* was published by the United Nations. Among the 158 nations that were ranked, Canada achieved 5th place, behind Switzerland, Iceland, Denmark and Norway. In contrast, the United States was placed 15th.

Its high ranking may have come as a surprise to many Canadians, who are perhaps less accustomed to thinking about their happiness than our neighbours to the south. In fact, the US's Declaration of Independence in 1776 gave three examples of "inalienable rights": life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Here in Canada, we are more likely to think of "peace, order and good government", from the Constitution Act of 1867.

The rankings in the *Report* were based on average life evaluations, obtained from Gallup World Poll data, where 0 represents the worst possible life and 10 the best possible. Countries at the top of the rankings averaged above 7.5, with those at the bottom averaging below 3. A difference of four points in average life evaluations separates the 10 happiest countries from the 10 that are least happy.

Most of the differences among countries are accounted for by differences in six key variables, each of which focusses on a different aspect of life. Of particular interest to us in the Salvation Army is that one of these variables was generosity, as measured by recent financial donations, adjusted for differences in income.

The other five variables used to explain happiness were:

- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita – in terms of Purchasing Power Parity, adjusted to constant dollars.
- Healthy life expectancy at birth.
- Social support – having someone to count on in times of trouble.
- Freedom to make life choices.
- Absence of corruption, in both government and business.

In addition to evaluations across entire populations, the *Report* analysed the findings by gender and age. On a global average basis, women's life evaluations are very slightly higher than those for men, while life evaluations start high among the youngest respondents, fall by .6 of a point by middle age, and remain flat thereafter. However, the global picture for age masks large differences between countries, with U-shapes in some and declines in others.

Readers may wonder whether Canadians' happiness is uniform across the country. An article in the Fall will report on the findings of another recent study which addresses this.

Did You Know? Live-Streaming from Boundless Congress

The Salvation Army's "Boundless Congress" to celebrate its 150th anniversary takes place in London, England, from July 1 - 5. Readers of *Money & Mission* may want to participate through live-streaming and social media interaction, particularly in the sending-forth service on Sunday, July 5.

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