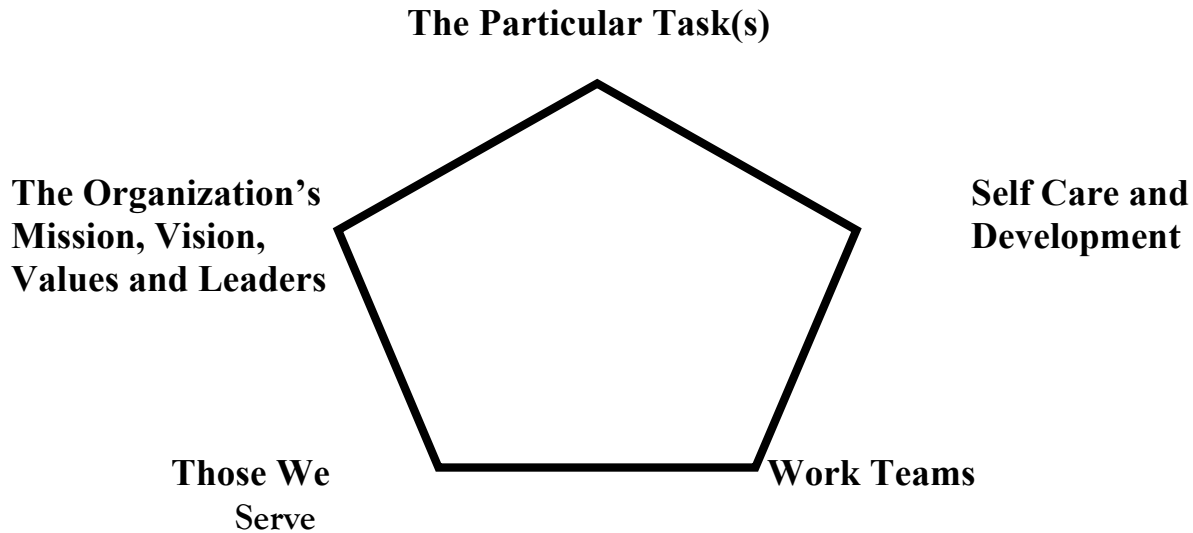


# ASPECTS OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

One way of describing the fullness of our participation in an organization is as five interrelated areas, each of which require competence and commitment.



## 1. The Particular Task(s)

This involves the specific functions of positions we have agreed to fulfill, e.g., building management or maintenance, social worker, CEO, board member, office support, financial development, church musician, teacher, etc. Competence means using skills and knowledge that are directly related to performing the task.

Commitment includes a work ethic that is interested in accomplishing the task, taking initiative, follow through, etc. Some people seem to view this one aspect of their involvement as being the whole thing. The success of the organization depends on people seeing their specific role in broad, inclusive terms.

## 2. The Organization's Mission, Vision, Values and Leaders

This includes knowing and supporting the mission, vision, values and leaders of the organization. Another way of expressing it is that we are adequately comfortable with and willing to play a positive role in the organization's culture (e.g. the way things are done, how we live and work together in this organization). Destructive or cynical comments about the organization and its leaders are avoided. There is active participation in organizational gatherings that build a sense of purpose and community or processes that contribute to the organization's improvement.

Related competencies might include communication, presentation and negotiation skills; large group participation, skills for planning and envisioning, etc.

## 3. Those We Serve: Clients, Customers and Members

The core commitment in this area is to the satisfaction of the people we are serving. A target is to exceed their expectations in the quality of our service or product. We need a clear understanding of who we are serving,

both those external and internal to the organization. Service is to be thorough, timely and respectful. We need a way of receiving ideas and feedback. Delivering quality services or products also requires us to take initiative to secure the quality we need from those that serve us by supplying our organization with services or products. It is in our interest to help them to improve their service to us. Competence includes methods for planning and delivering quality services or products, such as work flow, process assessments, problem solving processes, time management tools, communication skills, information gathering processes and tools, etc.

4. Work Teams

In our participation in organizational life most of us work in a variety of permanent and short term teams. Team effectiveness depends on our commitment to the people who make up the team and to the team's success. The competence areas involved include: group assessment and decision making processes, communication skills, an understanding of trust development in teams, how to establish team norms, facilitation skills, managing disagreements and conflict, etc.

5. Self Care and Development

This is a commitment to emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual self care and development. This may include making adequate time for solitude and relationship building; receiving training to increase our work related skills or learning "centering" methods. For many of us this area has to do with our striving to live lives of integrity, balance and integration.

Robert A. Gallagher  
1993

This is a variation on the work of Keilty, Goldsmith, and Boone in their "Five Commitments Model." See in *Management of Organizational Behavior*, Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson