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Administration

1) Introduction and Overview

The literacy level of a community is essential for many reasons:

- At least 50 % of the unemployed are functionally illiterate. (U.S. Department of Labor)
- On average, a functionally illiterate adult earns 42% less than a high school graduate. (U.S. Department of Education)
- The education of the parent is the single greatest predictor of whether a child will be raised in poverty. (U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services)
- Youngsters whose parents are functionally illiterate are twice as likely as their peers to be functionally illiterate themselves. (National Assessment of Education Progress)
- Persons with limited literacy skills have poorer health status than the rest of the population. (American Medical Association)
- An adult who is functionally illiterate cannot fill out a job application, review their child's homework, or read simple instructions.

Adult literacy is a central factor in the well-being of individuals, families, and neighborhoods in a community. In addressing this need, creating a program cannot be not a lone endeavor, but rather a collaborative effort that calls forth students, coordinators, volunteers, community leaders, business collaborators, and public policy makers. All work together as a community in mission, bonding with a common purpose in addressing this critical societal need.

2) Needs Assessment

If you are considering creating an adult literacy program, your experience has already told you there is a need. There are a few more questions to ask at the beginning:

What is the specific need that will be addressed?

- Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Family Literacy
- Preparation for General Education Diploma (GED)
- Family Literacy Program – Parent/Child Learning Center
- Basic Literacy – Reading, Math, Financial, Technology
- Combination of two or more of the above

Programs Already in Your Community

- Schools
- Non-profit agencies
- Social service agencies
- Faith-groups

Potential Clients

- Adults who did not complete high school
- Foreign students
- Migrant workers
- Previously incarcerated individuals
- Employees in entry-level positions

A **needs assessment** is a tool for clarifying the need, assigning priority to services that will be provided, and helping develop strategies.

Often a **focus group** is gathered consisting of 8 - 10 individuals with various backgrounds. Although most members would be from the community, experts in the field may be part of the initial development. This type of data is essential.

Market research will help determine who your potential clients are and where they are located. For example, you may want to speak to business owners and employers to see if they have hired employees with limited English proficiency or limited basic skills.

Demographic data can be found on websites such as <http://zipskinny.com> or <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/estimates/index.aspx>. This data will be useful when you apply for your tax-exempt status and for grants.

Resource :

Community Tool Box: http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_main_1042.htm

3) Identify Community Links

Who benefits by starting an adult literacy program?

- The Adult Learner. Communicating with those who are experiencing the challenges of being functionally illiterate will enable them to discuss what their needs are and the impact it has on their daily life. This will ultimately increase the effectiveness of services provided.
- Service Agencies. Collaboration between the adult literacy program and other service agencies enhances the use of community resources in addition to making the most of the resources available without duplicating services.
- Local Employers. Literate employees make fewer mistakes on the job and can take control of their own advancement while being able to assist the business or employer to reach goals.
- The Community. A literate community is one key to a community that uses its greatest resources, the members, to enhance the quality of life within that society.

Realizing the benefits that the program brings to a community creates a foundation from which to build. As part of the needs assessment, you encountered many individuals in your community, some of whom had a passion concerning adult literacy or the benefits. The contacts you make can be beneficial in several ways. These

contacts are the beginning network that will support the efforts either by getting involved, sharing ideas that will advance the cause, and/or financial support.

Resource :

Community Tool Box: <http://ctb.ku.edu>

4) Identify Stakeholders

Stakeholders are community members and other individuals who have a vested interest “at stake”. They are concerned about the impact illiteracy has on the individual and the society and would benefit from the services a literacy program would provide. Potential stakeholders include:

- human or social service agencies
- school district personnel
- business owners/employers
- libraries
- representatives from churches/faith-based groups
- vocational/technical instructors or administrators
- literacy advocates
- potential volunteers
- community leaders
- philanthropists
- local newspapers
- correctional institutions

Steering Committee

From these stakeholders, a Steering Committee may be formed. The people who have been part of your research/needs assessment focus group will often be the people with the passion and vision to take the program to the next step.

Responsibilities of the Steering Committee include:

- naming the organization
- filing the Articles of Incorporation
- finding funding and/or a fiscal agent
- drafting the mission statement and Bylaws
- beginning the program operation
- recruiting the Board of Directors
- organizing the first official meeting

5) Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

A mission statement should be one clear, concise sentence stating:

- who the agency is (name/nonprofit status/type of agency)
- what it does
- for whom and where (Source: www.idealists.org)

In addition to the three elements discussed above, you may want to address the following questions in developing your organization's mission statement:

- What is the problem or need your organization is trying to address? (i.e. illiteracy, teaching English)
- What makes your organization unique? (i.e. nonprofit, one-to-one tutoring with volunteer tutors, free, flexible scheduling, family literacy)
- Who are the beneficiaries of your work? (i.e. low-literate adults in your community, immigrants, refugees, drop-outs)

The answers to the questions above could be included in the mission statement or added as elaboration of the mission statement.

Vision Statement

A vision statement expresses the organization's optimal or ultimate goal and reason for existence. It should be brief, illustrating what you would like to see for the future.

Putting the Mission Statement in Writing

The mission statement expresses the collective intention of your organization. Whether it is drafted by one individual or the group, it is important that it reflects a consensus on the answer to the question used in developing the mission statement.

In a nutshell, it should answer the reporter's questions....Who, What, Where, Why, and How —

- Who does the organization serve?
- What do you plan to accomplish, affect, or change?
- When will services be provided, or goal reached?
- Where does the organization serve?
- Why does the organization exist? For what greater purpose or larger good?
- How will you accomplish this? Specify the services or activities.

For example: The ABC Agency

- How - provides art and music instruction and activities
- Who - to all children ages 3 to 18
- Where - in greater Anytown
- When - after school
- Why - in order to encourage
- What - intellectual and creative development.

One common approach:

- Each steering committee/board member answers the questions.

- They discuss these questions to find consensus
- They discuss where there are differences.
- This “process” continues until agreement is made.
- One or two individuals draft the wording.
- The mission statement is submitted to the group for their comments.
- It is edited and redrafted until everyone is in agreement with the wording.
- It is suggested to seek outside opinions from individuals unfamiliar with the organization to see how easily the mission statement can be understood.

There is benefit to regularly reviewing the organization’s mission statement. In the course of discussion, new members are introduced to nuances of an organization’s mission and change in the environment and old members refresh their understanding of both. As a result, the group will have confidence that the mission statement that emerges (whether it is a new statement or a rededication to the old mission statement) is genuinely an articulation of commonly held ideas.

Resources:

www.supportcenter.org

6) Start-up Checklist

The following table depicts the important steps required to register your new nonprofit.
Starting a Nonprofit Organization

Written by Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD

(Reprint permission granted for nonprofit use only.)

Activity	Comment	Notes
Draft mission statement	Draft a brief mission statement that describes the charitable purpose of your new organization; your board should soon review it during strategic planning and authorize the statement.	
Recruit board members	(If you plan to incorporate in your state) recruit at least enough board members to meet state requirements for a corporate board (contact state attorney's office); if you don't plan to incorporate, consider an informal advisory board to help guide you.	
Get a lawyer	To help you file articles of incorporation (if you plan to incorporate), application to IRS for tax exemption (if you plan to seek exemption from federal taxes); you can do most of the work yourself, but at least have a lawyer review the materials before submission; you will eventually need special expertise to review personnel policies.	
Get banker and bank account	Get a bank account; seek bank that understands needs of new, small nonprofit.	
Get accountant	Get an accountant or other finance expert to help you set up basic bookkeeping system; when you get a board treasurer, then he/she can be very helpful in this regard.	
Get insurance agent	You may need liability insurance, property insurance, and when you hire staff: worker's compensation, health and life insurance benefits, etc.	
Draft articles of incorporation and get board approval	These specify legal description of your organization and power to the board; you'll need to draft these only if you	

	plan to file for incorporation with your state; the board should approve the articles before submission.	
Draft bylaws and get board approval	These specify how the board will operate and configure the staff; some states require these; some of this information will be in the Articles if you file Articles; the board shall approve the bylaws.	
File for incorporation with the state	Register for incorporation including submitting your drafted and approved Articles (if you plan to incorporate); may need to submit bylaws, too; also find out what various reports the state wants from nonprofits.	
File for federal tax-exempt with IRS	Apply for tax-exempt status (to be exempt from paying federal taxes); board should approve this filing before submission.	
Get state tax exemption from state	Once you get IRS exemption, file for any state tax exemptions.	
Get property tax exemption from city	Once you get IRS exemption, file for any state tax exemptions.	
Get solicitation license	If you plan to solicit funds your city may require a solicitation license [as well as the state].	
Get mail permit	This permit gives you a discount on bulk mailings.	
Get federal employer number	[A TIN (Tax Identification Number), or federal employer number, is required to incorporate.](Do this once you start to hire employees) get federal employer number to withhold income and FICA (once you hire employees).	
Get unemployment insurance req's	Do this once you start to hire employees.	

Michigan Non-Profit offers additional information and checklist at:

<http://www.mnaonline.org/pdf/infrastructure.pdf>

<http://www.mnaonline.org/starting.asp>

7) Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing body of a nonprofit organization. The responsibilities of the board include:

- Determine or clarify mission and purpose
- Select an executive director
- Discuss and vote on high priority issues
- Advocate for the mission in the best interest of the organization
- Approve operating budget
- Assist with strategic planning
- Determine and monitor the organization's programs and services
- Carry out fundraising activities

An effective board can provide a foundation for the mission of the organization and a framework of expectations that make it possible for the management, staff, and volunteers to focus upon the day-to-day task of making the mission a reality.

The board should ensure that the chief executive has the personal and professional support he or she needs to further the goals of the organization. The chief executive, in partnership with the entire board, should decide upon a periodic evaluation of the chief executive's performance.

Helpful questions for board member "recruiters" to ask include:

- What expertise is needed to ensure the effectiveness and success of the program?
- Who is likely to have passion in the mission of the organization?
- What does the position offer to the prospective board member? Why join?

The ideal board will bring many talents. The members may include:

- Accountant who acts as the treasurer/bookkeeper
- Lawyer to advance in legal matters
- Educators who can share their expertise in literacy issues, teaching methodology, training, etc.
- Community leaders who will advocate and create awareness for the cause
- IT professional to assist with technology needs
- Human or social service professionals to recruit clients and to network
- Librarians
- Tutors
- Adult learners to share experience and give feedback about the program.

Even the best of teams experience challenges, so providing a "playbook" of policies that build unity and enthusiasm for the mission and define how conflict will be resolved will go a long way toward making sure that the board fulfills its purpose.

A *Position Description* for a Board Member is on the following page

New Literacy Program Board of Directors
Position Description
(Used with permission from Wisconsin Literacy)

Vision and Mission:

New Literacy Program's vision is to strengthen Michigan's workforce, families and communities through literacy. It pursues this vision by providing support, training and advocacy to community-based adult, family and workplace literacy programs throughout Michigan.

Purpose:

Responsible for supporting and enhancing the mission of *New Literacy Program* by participating in strategic planning, providing guidance regarding continuous service improvement, guaranteeing a stable financial base for program and communicating the mission of *New Literacy Program* to the wider community.

Specific Duties:

- Make a serious commitment to the cause of adult, family and workplace literacy.
- Attend quarterly board meetings.
- Participate actively on one or more committees.
- Attend board orientation meeting and Board development training when offered.
- Provide guidance to *New Literacy Center's* Executive Director.
- Create and implement a strategic plan for ensuring the organization's success.
- Participate in *New Literacy Center* activities that result from board decisions.
- Assist with the development of financial and community resources.
- Make a financial contribution consistent with ability to do so.
- Disclose potential conflicts of interests as they arise.
- Participate in an annual evaluation of the board's work.

Qualifications:

- Skills in areas such as fundraising, organizational change, financial services, marketing and communications, adult education, technology, volunteer management, law and government and community relations.
- Leadership qualities such as future orientation, global outlook, curiosity, risk taking, enthusiasm.
- Connection to community resources such as local businesses, financial resources, booksellers and publishers, public libraries and professional/political/social/community/religious organizations.
- Interpersonal skills such as empathy, capability of listening to learn, willingness to speak up and to compromise, ability to work well in a team and support group decisions, flexibility and good humor.
- Previous board or nonprofit experience is desirable.

Time Commitment: Quarterly board meetings (3 hours). Typically the last Friday of March, June, September, and the first Friday of December. Committee meetings/responsibilities (2 to 4 hrs/month).

Responsible to: Board President

I agree to accept this responsibility.

Signature: _____ Term Ends: June 2010

8) Board Development

Forming and maintaining a resourceful and productive board of Directors is crucial to the growth of your organization. The nominating committee of your board of Directors should meet periodically throughout the year to search for potential board members instead of just prior to the annual meeting where new members are elected. A diverse Board of Directors is imperative in representing those you serve, as well as gaining broader recognition in your community. A list of desired characteristics can be considered, such as:

- expertise: legal, fiscal, personnel management, etc.
- age and gender
- race and religion
- background: corporate, government or previous experience with nonprofits
- client population: representatives of the client population served

Requiring all new board members to participate in an orientation session before they attend their first meeting helps to lay the foundation for informed and committed board members. At or before the orientation session, they should receive:

- Board of Directors Position Description
- Articles of Incorporation
- Bylaws
- Funding Applications
- Personnel, fiscal and other board policies
- Annual Reports
- Names, contact and background information of the board members and key staff
- List of committees and committee duties
- Minutes of the last several board meetings
- Audits, budgets and recent financial statements

The board orientation should provide an opportunity for new members to ask questions of the board president and executive directors, tour the facility and staff offices, witness programming in action, get an update of current issues and review board members responsibilities.

Other steps to encourage productivity from the board include:

- Give specific projects to members.
- Keep board meetings on task and timely.
- Replace unproductive board members quickly.
- Thank board members for their work.
- Consider hosting a half-day or full-day board retreat off-site.
- Establish a policy that stipulates board dismissal for a certain number of unexcused absences from meetings.
- Re-elect only the board members who have met their responsibilities.
- Contact inactive board members to confirm their interest in serving.

Source: Grobman, Gary M. The Nonprofit Handbook. Third edition.

Resources: A Board of Director position description is in section 7, and Board Member Evaluation Checklist is located below.

Board Member Evaluation Checklist

- Attend no less than 75% of regular board meetings.
- Chair and/or serve on a standing committee or special project.
- Make a personal and, if possible, business contribution to the organization’s annual operating needs.
- Participate in or attend most of the program activities involving the operation.
- Arrange for and/or make an organization presentation to a civic club, church group, business associate or group of friends.
- Make at least five person-to-person visits to individuals, foundations, businesses or civic groups to request financial contributions for the organization.
- Invite and accompany a friend or associate to visit the facility.
- Recommend a potential candidate for board membership to the Board Development Committee.
- Secure a volunteer, in-kind service or material goods for the organization.
- Review and consider your capacity and willingness to make a planned gift or bequest to the organization.
- Secure at least 10 new donors/volunteers for the organization.
- Actively assist the special events of the organization.

Signature of Board Member Date

Signature of Board President Date

Signature of Executive Director Date

Resource:

The Wisconsin Literacy Tool Kit on Organizational Development, a project of Wisconsin Literacy

9) Applying for 501(c) (3) Status

Filing for 501(c) (3) status is beneficial for many reasons. You will need to file with the Internal Revenue Service for tax-exempt status under 501(c) (3). The IRS publication on filing can be found at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1023.pdf>. Within three to six weeks you will receive a letter granting the tax-exempt status to your organization.

Reasons to incorporate and be tax-exempt:

- As a separate legal entity, incorporation inserts a legal buffer between the corporation and the trustees, officers, members or other individuals. Assets at risk in a lawsuit or claims of creditors become the corporation's responsibility and are not the liability of individual trustees, officers, volunteers, etc.
- Nonprofit organizations may be exempt from property taxes on all or part of their real property.
- Incorporation frequently furthers an organization's status in the eyes of potential donors and the public.
- Nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations are exempt from federal income taxes on income related to the organization's exempt purposes.
- Nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations are exempt from federal unemployment taxes.
- Nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations may collect tax-deductible contributions, which may greatly facilitate fundraising.
- Nonprofit 501(c) (3) status is often required to receive grants from private foundations, as well as government grants and contracts.
- Nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations are often exempt from state sales taxes.
- Nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations may be eligible for reduced postal rates.

Source: www.njnonprofits.org

Resource:

Publication 557, "Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization":
www.irs.gov/publications/p557/index.html

10) Articles of Incorporation

Articles of Incorporation are necessary to apply for public or private grant money, to solicit for tax-deductible contributions, to protect individuals from personal liability for a group's activities, to get special postal rates, and to be exempt from property tax.

Articles of Incorporation:

- act as a charter to establish the existence of a nonprofit in your state
- are filed with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
- register your nonprofit name as a business entity within the state

The State of Michigan has a guide to forming Articles of Incorporation along with instructions that can be found at

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/CIS_Form_502_2457_7.pdf.

A domestic nonprofit corporation may be formed on either a membership or directorship basis. A membership corporation entitles the members to vote in determining corporate action. If organizations are on directorship basis the corporation may have members but they may not vote and corporate action is determined by the Board of Directors.

Detailed information on incorporating a business in the State of Michigan is found at

<http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/bcsc/forms/corp/pub/8011.pdf> .

Resources:

<http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/bcsc/forms/corp/pub/8011.pdf> .

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/CIS_Form_502_2457_7.pdf.

11) By-laws

By-laws are the rules adopted by an organization in order to regulate its own affairs. By-laws contain the tools for optimal governance, as well as guidelines for ensuring that activities carried out are done so legally and in the best interest of the organization's mission. By-laws are important, but they do not need to be lengthy. By-laws may require amendments in order to keep pace with changes that occur over time.

By-laws define how the organization will operate, such as:

- number of members of the board
- length of the terms of membership
- all of the officer positions
- how meetings are conducted
- the responsibilities of the board
- committees

An example of by-laws with membership can be found at:

<http://www.mncn.org/info/samplebylawswithmembers.pdf>

Resource:

<http://www.mncn.org/info/samplebylawswithmembers.pdf>

12) Getting Started Financially

Seed Money

Most agencies' initial funding will come from:

- Stakeholders who are passionate about the mission. Steering Committee/Board Members want to be part of this venture if they are fully invested and understand the benefits your agency will bring to the community. Support comes not only in time, but also in contacts, personal resources, and approaching others for seed money.
- Community supporters such as churches, employers you may be assisting, etc.
- Grants
- Fundraising

Grants and fundraising will be hard to obtain until the agency is incorporated as a tax-exempt nonprofit. During this interim, often a fiscal agent is approached. Jeanne Vogel and Fundraising Innovations define a fiscal agent as "an organization that manages the finances for another organization, generally until the second organization gets on its feet." The fiscal agent sponsors the new agency using its own nonprofit status to apply for funding. Actual grant writing and fundraising is done by the new nonprofit.

General Guidelines

Choose a fiscal agent:

- whose mission and vision compliments your organization
- that will be willing to mentor you in other areas such as fundraising, marketing, grant writing, etc.
- in which you will not be in direct competition for fundraising/grants

Board approval from the new nonprofit agency and the fiscal agent should be acquired. Terms of the agreement should be in writing along with a plan for the new nonprofit to become independent.

Resources:

www.nonprofit-innovations.com/fiscal_agents.htm

www.compasspoint.org/askgenie

13) Strategic Planning

Strategic planning outlines the future direction of an organization over the next several years, steps it will take to move in that direction, and ways of measuring the success. The focus of a strategic plan takes into consideration the demographic changes in an agency's service area, advances in technology, competition from for-profit and not for-profit businesses, changes in key personnel, or cuts in funding. Small nonprofits tend to focus more on matters of board development, fundraising and volunteer management.

The process of creating a strategic plan is as important as the plan itself. Students, tutors, staff, board members and funders are included in the process. Goals and objectives are established based on the mission and vision of the organization.

Benefits of Strategic Planning:

- Through the process the mission and vision of the organization are clarified.
- Goals and objectives are based on the mission and vision.
- Allows the organization to be proactive rather than reactive in decision making.
- Those involved in the process develop a sense of ownership of the plan.
- The plan provides a base from which progress can be measured and establishes a mechanism for informed change when needed.
- The plan provides a template for staff to implement.

The strategic plan should be done when the organization is getting started along with its business plan, marketing plan, operations plan, and financial plan.

Costs of Strategic Planning:

Money – An in-depth strategic plan usually costs money. Amounts can range from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars. Check with your local United Way Extension program for strategic planning services that are sometimes offered at discount or free.

Time – Staff and board resources have been diverted to meeting preparation, attendance, minutes, and drafting of the final plan. Hiring an outside strategic planner also takes some time. The process itself can vary from a few days of intensive strategic planning to more than one year.

Potential Bad Will – The strategic planning process requires that the participants be extremely honest as to the agency's strengths and weaknesses, including where staff capabilities need to be improved or modified. Current staff members may feel threatened. If the plan is not implemented, participating board members may feel their time involved was wasted. Not all will agree to new direction for the organization suggested by the strategic planning process.

Steps to Creating a Strategic Plan

Step One - Getting Ready

There are a few things to consider when deciding to develop a strategic plan. Is the time right? Are the organization's leaders truly committed to the effort and are they able to devote the necessary attention to visioning the future? Certain issues may keep an organization from creating a plan. For example, if there are immediate issues that strain resources such as a funding crisis or the resignation of a key founder, the time may not be right.

Documenting the timetable and the process will help clarify whether the time is right and resources are available to move forward. Write down the required tasks and person(s) responsible for:

- appointing a committee
- hiring a facilitator
- leading the orientation of the committee
- choosing the meeting site
- scheduling meetings
- writing the first draft of the plan
- setting up procedures to revise the plan
- contacting agency stakeholders for their input
- writing the final plan
- developing the process for the full board's review and adoption of the plan

If the time is right, the organization can advance on the following tasks:

- identify specific issues or choices that the planning process should address
- clarify roles (who does what in the process)
- create a Planning Committee
- develop an organizational profile
- identify the information that must be collected to help make sound decisions

What you have at the end of Step One is a work plan that can be brought before the board for approval.

Step Two – Clarifying the Mission and Vision

A mission statement is an introductory paragraph that expresses the values of the organization, the community needs it meets, and how it will meet these needs. The mission statement summarizes the what, how, and why of an organization's work. The vision statement presents an image of what success will look like.

Sample of a Mission Statement:

The mission of the Tippecanoe Literacy Center (TLC) is to provide tutoring service to adults who desire to improve their basic reading, writing, math and computer skills.

Respectful of the dignity of each person, the TLC will offer learners educational opportunities which will prepare them to successfully live out their own role as parent, worker, and citizen.

Sample of a Vision Statement:

The vision of the Tippecanoe Literacy is to eliminate adult illiteracy in our community by 100%, making it possible for every adult to live up to their potential as a parent, employee, and citizen.

At the end of Step Two, a draft mission statement and a draft vision statement is developed.

Step Three – Assessing the Situation

Having clarified the purpose of the organization and what it hopes to be in the future, it is time to look at the current environment. Here an organization will go through the **SWOT** analysis. Assessing the situation includes analyzing the organization's **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats to the organization. These could include a variety of primary concerns, such as funding issues, new program opportunities, changing regulations or changing needs in the client population, and so on. The point is to choose the most important issues to address. No more than five to ten critical issues are considered when organizing the strategic plan.

At the end of Step Three, data has been gathered that will help steer the development of the strategic plan.

Step Four - Developing Strategies, Goals, and Objectives

The **strategy** will be based upon goals and objectives. Goals summarize the program's developmental and administrative accomplishments that it must achieve in order to fulfill its mission.

Sample **Goals**:

Program – To increase the number of students tutored

Fund Development – To increase revenue and financial support for the program services

Administrative – To ensure appropriate staffing, compensation, and policies for effective functioning of the organization.

Objectives support the goals and provide more details. They should be **SMART**: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**esults oriented, and **T**ime bound. They answer the question "Who will do what by when?"

Sample of Objectives:

Program – To develop a recruitment marketing plan to recruit 20 new students during the fiscal year.

Fund Development – To develop and implement an annual contributor campaign and solicit 25 new donors by the end of the fiscal year.

Administrative – To develop, review, approve, and implement a new personnel manual by the end of the fiscal year.

Action Steps outline the exact activities necessary to achieve the objective and may include the task, the persons responsible, and the date of expected completion.

The end product of Step Four is an outline of the organization's strategic directions - the general strategies, long-range goals, and specific objectives of its response to critical issues.

Step Five - Completing the Written Plan

The mission has been articulated, the critical issues identified, and the goals and strategies agreed upon. It is time to put it down on paper. The plan now holds the ideas of key constituents including staff, steering committee/board members, etc. Revisions should not be dragged out for months, but action should be taken to answer any important questions that are raised at this step. It would certainly be a mistake to bury conflict at this step just to wrap up the process more quickly, because the conflict, if serious, will inevitably undermine the potency of the strategic directions chosen by the planning committee.

Source:

http://www.allianceonline.org/FAQ/strategic_planning/what_are_basic_steps.faq

Resources:

There are many resources on strategic planning. The following are only a few:

http://www.allianceonline.org/FAQ/strategic_planning/what_are_basic_steps.faq
www.managementhelp.org

Alison, Michael. Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations. Second Edition

Bary, Bryan W. Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations. Revised and Updated.

Bryson, John M. Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizational Achievement. Third Edition.

Howe, Fisher. The Board Member's Guide to Strategic Planning: A practical Approach to Strengthening Nonprofit Organizations.

14) Budget Management

A budget depicts what you expect to spend (expenditures) and generate (revenue) over a specific time period, normally your fiscal year. It is essentially a document that translates the organization's plans into dollars. It answers the questions of: 1) how much money will have to be spent to meet planned goals and 2) how much money will need to be generated to cover costs.

- The budget is an essential management tool. Having a sound budget is crucial to helping manage the financial aspects of your organization. Without a budget, you are like the captain of a ship navigating without instruments.
- The budget tells you how much money you need to carry out your activities.
- Used properly, the budget tells you when you will need money.
- The budget forces you to thoroughly think through what you have planned.
- Many times, the budgeting process itself will force you to reassess your action plan.
- The budget allows you to monitor your income and expenditures and identify any problems.
- The budget is the basis for financial accountability and transparency.
- Many donors require that you have a budget when requesting funding. They use this information to decide if what you are asking for is reasonable and well-planned.

Basic Principles of Developing a Good Budget

Both program staff and financial staff should work with the executive director and board to develop budgets that reflect organizational priorities and act as a guide for spending and decision making. The budget as developed should fit into the organization's strategic plan. For a smaller organization without staff that can handle the budget in process, it makes sense to have someone on your board with financial skills who is willing and able to help.

Rely on past history as a starting point. Don't just use last year's budget and increase it by an arbitrary percentage. Consider changes that aren't reflected in the prior year's number such as insurance rate increases, increases in utility rates, etc.

The budget should be based on reasonable assumptions, which are supported by past history, new information, statistics, etc.

Steps to Developing the Budget

At least two or three months before the beginning of your next fiscal year, you will want to start to think about the next year's budget. The budget should correspond to the organization's operating cycle, for instance, a nonprofit relying on government funding might choose a fiscal year ending June 30.

Steps:

1. Review the program and management's achievements and financial results of the year just ending.
2. Determine your goals and objectives for the next year.
3. Estimate the costs required to achieve those objectives. This should include such things as cost of new staff, additional supplies needed, etc.
4. Project the amount of revenue from all sources. The financial staff, executive director and fundraising committee have to make the most realistic assessment possible.
5. Compare revenue and expenditures to see if the preliminary budget results in a deficit, surplus, or breakeven situation. If the results are not acceptable, go back and review the revenues and expenditures to see where adjustments can be made until the budget is acceptable.
6. Once the budget is done, it must be approved by the full board.

NOTE: Each program should have its own budget so it can be viewed and assessed independently of the organization as a whole.

It is helpful to break the budget down by month so that each "monthly" budget reflects the timing of revenue and expenses on a realistic basis. Don't just automatically divide the full budget into twelve equal parts. For instance, if the entire insurance premium is due in January the full cost should be reflected in that month. You will get a clearer indication of where the organization is by preparing monthly budgets and comparing them to actual dollars spent and received. This will help you to spot changes (positive or negative) and address them accordingly.

Once the budget is done, use it! Don't just put it away until the next budget planning period. It is a management tool that should be monitored on a regular basis.

Each month you should update your budget report to include actual revenue and expenditures. Then you can compare your planned revenue and expenditures to your actual revenue and expenditures. This will give you a good idea whether you are operating according to plan or not, including where you need to cut down on costs and build up on revenue. If used properly, the budget also allows you to: report how you are doing financially to staff, board and donors; do cash flow projections; and make financial decisions.

Resources:

An example of a budget form is located on the following pages.

- Simple Budget Worksheet: www.moneysmartchoices.org/nonprofit/np-budgetworksheet.html
- Budgeting toolkit by Janet Shapiro: www.civicus.org/new/media/Budgeting.pdf
- www.foundationcenter.org/getstarted/faqs/html/samplebudget.html
- www.managementhelp.org/finance/np_fnce/basics.htm
- www.mncn.org/info/basic_fin.htm
- <http://www.communityaccountants.org/services/publications/>

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**2009 Budget vs. 2009 Actual
XXX Literacy Council**

	Budget 2009	Actual 2009	Over/ (Under) Budget
REVENUE			
Temporarily Restricted Contributions			
Name of Grant/Source	3,000.00	3,500.00	500.00
Name of Grant/Source	2,500.00	2,000.00	(500.00)
Total Temporarily Restricted Cont.	5,500.00	5,500.00	0.00
Unrestricted			
Contributions			
Campaign for _____	3,500.00	5,000.00	1,500.00
Other Contributions	1,000.00	250.00	(750.00)
Total Unrestricted Contributions	4,500.00	5,250.00	750.00
Government Grants/Contracts			
AEFL	15,000.00	17,500.00	2,500.00
Even Start	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
Total Government Grants/Contracts	30,000.00	32,500.00	2,500.00
Special Events/Net of Expense			
Name of Event	5,000.00	4,500.00	(500.00)
Name of Event	5,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00
Total Special Events/Net of Expense	10,000.00	10,500.00	500.00
Program Income			
Program Fees/Workbooks	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
Contract Services/Workforce	5,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00
Total Program Income	6,000.00	7,000.00	1,000.00
Other (General Interest)			
General	500.00	450.00	(50.00)
Board Designated	500.00	750.00	250.00
Donor Restricted	500.00	250.00	(250.00)
Total Other (General Interest)	1,500.00	1,450.00	(50.00)
TOTAL REVENUE	57,500.00	62,200.00	4,700.00

**2009 Budget vs. 2009 Actual
XXX Literacy Council**

EXPENDITURES	Budget 2009	Actual 2009	Over/ (Under) Budget
Personnel Costs			
Wages and Salaries	30,000.00	32,000.00	2,000.00
FICA Tax	1,860.00	1,984.00	124.00
Medicare Tax	435.00	464.00	29.00
Total Personnel Costs	32,295.00	34,448.00	2,153.00
Professional Fees	2,500.00	3,000.00	500.00
Supplies/Postage/Printing			
Administrative	500.00	650.00	150.00
Office Supplies	1,000.00	1,200.00	200.00
Program Supplies	1,000.00	1,100.00	100.00
Library Supplies	550.00	500.00	(50.00)
Cost of Workbooks	650.00	750.00	100.00
Library Books	1,000.00	850.00	(150.00)
Postage	1,000.00	1,250.00	250.00
Fundraising	750.00	1,000.00	250.00
Special Event	750.00	500.00	(250.00)
Publicity and Promotion	1,000.00	750.00	(250.00)
Total Supplies/Postage/Printing	8,200.00	8,550.00	350.00
Occupancy Costs			
Rent	0.00	0.00	0.00
Insurance	1,000.00	1,200.00	200.00
Telephone	1,000.00	1,500.00	500.00
Repairs/Maintenance	500.00	1,000.00	500.00
Program Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Occupancy Cost	2,500.00	3,700.00	1,200.00
Depreciation	500.00	500.00	0.00
Miscellaneous			
Student/Tutor Assistance	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	500.00	450.00	(50.00)
Total Miscellaneous	1,500.00	1,450.00	(50.00)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	47,495.00	51,648.00	4,153.00
TOTAL REVENUE	57,500.00	62,200.00	4,700.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	47,495.00	51,648.00	4,153.00
NET EXCESS/(DEFICIT)	10,005.00	10,552.00	547.00

15) Policies and Practices

The following pages contain examples from member agencies of two of the major policies for literacy programming: personnel policies and financial policies. These are examples only and should not be adopted as presented without verifying current federal and state requirements.

Within the other sections of this tool kit are suggestions of policies your agency might consider drafting, including computer use, volunteer and learner policies.

Resources:

- Examples of personnel and financial policies are located on the following pages. You can also find examples of various forms and personnel policies at:
http://www.mncn.org/info/template_hr.htm#Sample%20Personnel%20Policies

Personnel Policies

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction to the Employee Handbook

This handbook does not constitute a contract between *XXX Literacy Center* and the employee. Policies set forth can be changed at any time and may not cover all practices and situations.

The employee relationship between *XXX Literacy Center* and the employee is “terminable at will.” That means the relationship can be terminated at any time by the employee or by the supervisor.

1.01 Mission Statement

The XXX Literacy Center exists to offer individualized tutoring in the English language to residents of the McKinley Park and surrounding areas at no cost to the student. The Center accepts all persons, regardless of race, color or creed. We strive to provide an environment conducive to learning and one that reverences and respects each individual person.

Closely allied with this intent is the fostering of independent learning and personal growth and responsibility. Included in our mission is the economic, political and social effectiveness of those whom we serve. Our service is based upon the expertise and experience of the Adrian Dominican Sisters and their continuing commitment to education.

The Center is an affiliate of Pro Literacy America.

1.02 Site Information

XXX Literacy Center
3525 This Street
This Town, MI 49123

Phone: #313-927-9830 #313-927-0512
Fax: #313-927-8980
E-mail: Yourlit@aol.com
Web: www.yourliteracycenter.com

SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

2.01 EEOC Statement

The XXX Literacy Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Recruitment, employment and promotion are based on an individual's qualifications to meet job requirements without regard to age, race, sex, disability, national origin, social or economic status, religion or creed.

2.02 Disabled Employees

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act and U.S. Supreme Court decisions, *XXX Literacy Center* reserves the right to ensure that any disabled applicant is capable of performing the essential functions of the job for which he or she has applied, with or without an accommodation to his/her condition.

2.03 Application Follow Through

Once a preliminary employment decision has been made, but before an offer of employment is extended, *XXX Literacy Center* will make a complete reference check of all past job information, either by telephone or in writing.

All verified reference checks will be kept in the employee's personnel file. If damaging or derogatory information is discovered during the reference checks, or information or statements are shown to be false or inaccurate, the Director should discuss the conflicting information with the applicant. If a satisfactory answer is received and verified, the decision to hire may be made. If not, the applicant should not be considered for the position.

A reference check with a potential employee's current employer will always be a part of the hiring process. *XXX Literacy Center* and the applicant can mutually agree upon the process through which this occurs.

2.04 Convictions

Applicants convicted of felonies may not be hired without written consent of the Director. *XXX Literacy Center* reserves the right to investigate and consider conviction records thoroughly.

2.05 Employment Classification

The first three months of employment are considered provisional; thereafter, employees are categorized as:

- Full time--One is expected to work thirty-two hours or more per week.

- Part time--One who works 31 hours or less each week.

Some employees may be hired on a temporary basis for a limited period of time or to complete a discrete, specialized task.

2.06 Work Schedules

Because the Center employs a small number of employees, work schedules vary and are agreed upon on an on-going basis by the Center's full-time staff members.

2.07 Holiday Observances

XXX Literacy Center observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Independence Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving

2.08 Performance Appraisal

A position description is given to each employee prior to the beginning of employment. These position descriptions, reviewed on a regular basis, become the focal point of regular staff evaluations. An evaluation occurs after an individual completes a three-month provisional employment period. Thereafter, evaluations occur annually prior to April 1st. Performance appraisals are kept in each employee's personnel file.

2.09 Employee Termination/Layoff Procedures

An employee who plans to leave *XXX Literacy Center* employment is asked to notify the Center's Director personally and in writing thirty days prior to the last day of work.

An employee who is terminated by the Center's Director will be notified personally and in writing fifteen days prior to the last day. If the termination basis is of a serious nature, an individual may be terminated immediately. See Section 3.01, No. 5 for some examples of serious misconduct.

2.10 Wages and Pay Procedures

Time sheets, signed by an employee's supervisor are kept for hourly employees to document and authorize payment to employees. Payment is processed by the Financial Administrator.

Employment records are maintained for each employee that detail wage rates, benefits, taxes withheld each pay period and any changes in employment status.

Payroll related taxes (federal/state income tax, employee and employer share of social security and other taxes) are withheld and paid to federal/state agencies on a timely basis.

Unclaimed paychecks are held for three months.

Year-end tax summaries (W-2's) are distributed to employees and responses to inquiries regarding W-2's are provided in a timely manner. Unclaimed W-2's are mailed before January 31st of each year.

Each employee has a payroll/personnel file containing updated salary, benefits, employment status and withholding information, as well as beginning date and termination date when applicable. These records are retained for six years.

Payroll checks are issued twice a month: on the 15th and on the last day of each month.

2.11 Vacation [Staff]

Employees earn paid vacation time effective on their anniversary date during the first year of employment. After this time, vacation is accrued annually, beginning July 1 as follows:

Full time: First year – 1 week
 Second year – 2 weeks
 Seventh year – 3 weeks
 Twelfth year – 4 weeks

Part time: Same length of service schedule as full-time employees, prorated according to the employees scheduled hours worked per week.

2.12 Sick Time

Annually, each staff person is given a bank of sick time on January 1st. Regular full-time employees accrue sick leave at a rate of one (1) day per month. Regular part-time employees accrue sick leave on a percentage basis in proportion to a forty (40) hour week. This time is not accrued from year to year.

Sick time may also be used for personal matters and such occurrences as a death in the family or illness of a dependent family member. Employees are to notify their immediate supervisor in advance, if they choose to take a personal day from this bank of time.

The supervisor may require an employee to present a physician's statement in the event of frequent absences or an absence exceeding two (2) consecutive working days and in cases where a medical leave is required. Should it be established that the employee or family member dependent on him/her for care is not actually suffering from an illness or injury, compensation will be stopped and disciplinary action, including possible dismissal, may be taken.

2.13 Health Insurance

Under discussion

2.14 Leaves of Absence/Family Medical Leave

After one year of employment, an employee may request in writing and may be granted a leave of absence without pay for up to twelve weeks or sixty working days. The employee must have worked at least six of the twelve preceding months. Such a leave may be granted for religious, educational or military purposes, as well as for extended jury duty, health needs or considered as a maternity or family leave. The employee has the right to return to a position of a like nature at the end of the granted leave. Failure to return from a leave on or before the expiration date will be considered as termination of one's employment.

Accumulated vacations days must be used during the term of the leave. For those on medical leave, accumulated sick days must also be used. There is no compensation for the remaining days including any holidays that occur during that time.

The employee on FMLA leave is entitled to medical benefits as though the employee was still on the job. *The XXX Literacy Center* will continue to make its regular contribution toward the employee. The employee on leave, however, does not receive or accrue any additional benefits during unpaid leave.

The employee must provide a thirty (30) day advance notice for foreseeable leaves. The terms and conditions of the requested leave will be agreed upon between the *XXX Literacy Center* and the employee and will be expressed in writing.

Employees returning from a medical leave of absence will be required to submit a written release from their doctor before reporting to work. Employees who fail to return to work on the day specified will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from the *XXX Literacy Center*.

2.15 Civic Duty

Jury Duty: Employees called for jury duty will not be penalized by loss of compensation as a result of their absence. While serving on a jury, the employee will be paid his/her regular wages.

Military Duty Leave: *XXX Literacy Center* shall respect the employee's prior commitments to serve military duty. Schedules for work will accommodate these commitments as best as the *XXX Literacy Center* is able, as long as such commitments are discussed and documented with the Director or his/her designee.

SECTION 3: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

3.01 Disciplinary Procedures

It is essential that *XXX Literacy Center* employees conduct themselves in a professional manner and extend appropriate courtesy to students, volunteers, visitors, co-workers and vendors. A cheerful and positive attitude is essential to the Center's commitment to the highest quality of service provision.

Mutual respect on the part of all employees fosters the best working conditions. In cases of unsatisfactory performance, violation of standards of behavior or conduct detrimental to the *XXX Literacy Center*, a progressive discipline process will ordinarily be utilized in the following steps.

1. The employee will be given verbal warning by his/her supervisor. The time frame for correction will be made in a supervisory memo to the employee and a copy placed in the supervisor's file.
2. If after the verbal warning the problem is not corrected, the employee will be given a written reprimand. All written disciplinary statements shall include suggestions and time frame for improvement and/or corrective measures, with copies given to the employee and placed in the employee's personnel file.
3. If improvement is evidenced within the time frame, the supervisor shall document in writing the examples of the improvement with copies for the employee and for the employee's personnel file. If the improvement is not evidenced within the noted time frame, disciplinary action such as suspension or dismissal will be pursued.
4. The employee may respond to the written disciplinary statement. A copy will be placed in the employee's file.
5. In case of serious misconduct, there will be no progressive disciplinary procedure. Violation of these policies may result in termination of employment. Examples of serious misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Revealing confidential information to unauthorized persons
- Unsatisfactory work performance
- Unauthorized or excessive absence and/or tardiness
- Falsifying and/or altering records, including one's employment application or resume
- Stealing or dishonesty
- Sexual harassment
- Insubordination
- Having a weapon/explosives on *XXX Literacy Center* site
- Abusive physical contact with a co-worker or student, including fighting or provoking a fight
- Being under the influence of or having drugs and/or alcohol on one's person at the workplace.

3.02 Intoxicants and drugs

Bringing alcohol and/or illegal drugs onto *XXX Literacy Center* grounds is not permitted. An employee under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs not prescribed by a physician will be asked to leave the premises and may be subject to immediate termination. An employee taking prescribed drugs, which may impair performance or endanger the safety of others, must notify the Center's Director.

"Under the influence" is defined as being in a physical or mental condition that creates a risk to the safety and well being of the individual, other employees, the clients served and/or *XXX Literacy Center* property.

3.03 Telephone Use

Telephone lines at the *XXX Literacy Center* must remain open for business calls and provide access for the students and volunteers. Employees are requested to discourage any personal incoming or outgoing calls. The exception is an emergency call. No long distance calls are to be made on Center phones unless they are related to the business of the Center. Personal calls should only be made during break periods.

3.04 Harassment

It is the policy of the *XXX Literacy Center* that each employee enjoys a work environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment setting. No employee, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or actions, either verbal or physical.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional, socially accepted compliments. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, and that lowers morale and therefore, interferes with workplace effectiveness.

The Center's Director has the responsibility to maintain a workplace free from sexual harassment. This duty includes discussing this policy with all supervisors and each employee and assuring the employee that there is no reason to endure insulting comments, degrading or exploitative sexual treatment.

Specifically, no employee shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an individual employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, job performance appraisal, wages, and condition of employment or career development. An employee who believes that he or she is or has been the subject of sexual harassment should immediately report the alleged charge to the Center's Director. All information will be held in strict confidence and will be disclosed only on a need-to-know basis in order to investigate and resolve matters.

The report should be in accordance with the following procedures.

Procedures:

1. The person alleging sexual harassment will report the incident to the Director and will be interviewed to discuss the allegations. If the accusations are made to any other person, the matter must be forwarded immediately to the Director.
2. The alleged harasser will be called to the Director's office and will be informed of the seriousness of the allegations. The Director will review with the alleged harasser *XXX Literacy Center's* policy and indicate that a charge of sexual harassment has been made. The alleged harasser will then have the opportunity to refute the allegations by response in writing.
3. The Director will meet with the alleged harasser's supervisor and discuss the seriousness of the allegations. Any employee who is found after appropriate investigation to have engaged in sexual harassment of another employee will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

3.05 Grievance Procedure

The XXX Literacy Center is committed to providing an open, caring workplace atmosphere. Concerns, problems, complaints, disagreements or questions may be brought forward for consideration and resolution. The Employee should request the initiation of the grievance procedure with the Center's Director. The following procedures will then be set in motion to express and resolve issues of concern. An employee may do so without fear of reprisal.

1. Within five working days of the request to initiate the grievance procedure, the employee is to discuss the issue with the Director.

2. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached within the next five working days, the employee will put the issues needing further discussion in writing for the Director. The Director will meet with the employee for further discussion. A written response is due from the Director within ten working days.
3. If further discussion is necessary, an employee or the Director may request a meeting with the Center's Board President within ten working days. The Board President's decision is final. The final decision must be in writing. Copies are then to be given to the Director and the employee within five working days after the meeting.

3.06 Computer Use

XXX Literacy Center computers are the property of the Center and as such may not be altered or tampered with by employees. Internet use is restricted to that which is directly related to the work of the Center.

Computer equipment, including laptops and other related equipment, may not be used for personal use of any kind without the approval of one's supervisor. No additional programs may be installed on any Center computer without the written approval of one's supervisor. Examples of these additional programs are games, online services and screen savers. Copying of programs installed on Center computers is not allowed.

3.07 Internet Use

The following policies relate to the use of the Internet.

1. Resources of any kind, for which there is a fee, must not be accessed or downloaded without prior approval of a supervisor.
2. Resources that involve executable or binary files must not be downloaded without being properly scanned for viruses.
3. Resources that are not used for literacy purposes must not be accessed or downloaded.
4. Individual users must be aware of, and at all times attempt to, prevent potential liability in their use of the Internet. Under no circumstances should proprietary *XXX Literacy Center* information be passed through the Internet nor should such materials be encrypted, if transmitted over the Internet.
5. Gambling via the Internet is prohibited.

3.08 Disruptive Actions and Terrorism

1. *The XXX Literacy Center* is a place of learning and as such promotes an atmosphere of peace and a healthy learning environment for all students and staff. Any actions that are disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated. The Board of Directors of the *XXX Literacy Center* ensures that terrorism or acts of violence will not be tolerated. If such an incident should occur the proper measures will be taken in compliance with the law.

PROCUREMENT POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide a method by which purchase can be made for the XXX organization.

ATTACHMENT: Purchase Order

1. Designated Staff shall use purchase orders whenever possible to purchase goods and services. The purchase orders will be pre-numbered. Purchase orders (POs) shall be completely filled out and approved by the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors prior to the purchase. POs are obtained from the Executive Director or designated staff person.
2. Use of POs shall be recorded in a computer generated PO Log at the time they are initiated. The computer log will contain the number of the PO, the date the PO is issued, the name of the staff person requesting the PO, and the vendor. If a purchase order is void after issuance it will be so noted in the log.
3. Purchases less than \$100.00 shall be made at the discretion of the Executive Directors.

When quotes are required, they shall be documented and attached to the purchase order when applicable. The quotation shall include:

The potential vendor's name & address, description & necessity of purchase, estimated cost and amount not to exceed, payment terms, and date of delivery.

The Treasurer and President of XXX shall approve purchases over \$100 dollars and not exceeding \$500. Purchases over \$500.00 shall be reviewed and approved by the full Board of Directors, or a designated committee of the Board. Such items may be approved in the budget process and must indicate payment allocated from grant or general funds.

All approvals for purchase shall be voted on at the monthly Directors meeting.

The exception to this rule is necessity due to non-meetings, scheduled meetings that have previously occurred for the current month. These will be e-mailed to all Board of Directors and voted per the By-Laws of majority votes by e-mail.

Reference "Organizational By-Laws" Article VI section 5 & 6.

4. The purchase order shall be filled out completely indicating the specific program to be charged in the account and fund section of the PO. The purchase order shall indicate purpose of purchase in the notes/ remarks section of the PO. The Executive Director shall review each purchase order for reasonableness; necessity of purchase, and to ensure the purchase amount is within budget. After review, the Executive Director shall approve and forward to the Treasurer, President or Board of Directors as appropriate.

5. Upon full approval, the purchase order shall be forwarded to the vendor and the XXX organization will retain a copy. Designated staff shall be responsible for ensuring that the item is received and documenting receipt on the packing slip, invoice or PO. Upon verification of receipt, the copy of the purchase order shall be filed in the prospective "Open Accounts Payable" file to be attached to the invoice when it is received.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide a procedure to insure all invoices are properly authorized for payment and are charged to the appropriate accounts.

ATTACHMENT: None

1. The Executive Director will indicate on each invoice, the account(s) to which the expense is to be charged or whether it is to be allocated, initial and date to be paid. Verification of receipt (purchase order) will be attached to the invoice.
2. The XXX will pay from Invoices and not from Statements. "Statements" summarize all invoices issued in prior months, and during the current month indicating past due amounts. Statements should be utilized to verify receipt and payment of invoices listed, and not as the basis for payment due.
3. After approval, all invoices are faxed to Accounting Services.
4. Accounting Services will process checks for invoices designated by the Executive Director for payment. However, all checks generated require signatures of the Treasurer as well as the Executive Director.
5. Accounting Service will review each invoice, verify the fund source and receipt documentation, and assign the expense period according to the Executive Director's indication, but within required payment deadlines. Scheduling will be made to take advantage of any cash discounts being offered.
6. To maximize efficiency and keep costs at minimum, accounts payable checks will be processed twice a month, at the same time payroll checks are processed (15th & 30th respectively). Additional checks may be issued at the Director, Treasurer, or President's request.
7. The XXX is exempt from sales tax. If sales tax is billed, the sales tax will be deducted from the invoice, and a copy of the tax-exempt status shall be mailed with the check.
8. All checks generated for payment require two (2) signatures. The Treasurer and Executive Director are authorized check signers.
9. All checks must have two (2) signatures. A third (3) person designated from the Finance Committee that will be noted at XXX's Financial Institution as a signer in the absence of the Treasurer or Executive Director.
10. The Accounting Service will process accounts payable checks and mail to the Treasurer of XXX. The checks will be signed by the Treasurer and forwarded to the Director of his/her signature. Time lapses between receipt of checks by the Treasurer and receipt to the Executive Director shall be 2 business days.
11. The Executive Director disburses payment of Accounts Payable checks. Each check is mailed with the remittance stub and tax-exempt status (if applicable) to the vendor. The Treasurer for XXX may disburse payments in the absence of the Director.
12. The check number and the date are indicated on the invoice/ source documentation for the invoice and filed in the appropriate vendor folder; most current paid first.

13. All payments due to vendors will be recorded on the cash flow projection with the due date and estimated pay date and remain on the cash flow projection until payment has been processed.

CASH RECEIPTS POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide a procedure for depositing cash receipts when they are received.

ATTACHMENT: Deposit Summary Log

1. When the designated staff member opens the mail, any cash receipts received are stamped with the date received and forwarded to the Executive Director. Cash receipts from other sources are forwarded to the Executive Director as they are received.
2. The Executive Director will endorse checks "For Deposit Only." The cash receipts are recorded on the deposit summary log. The Executive Director reviews the Cash Receipts and Deposit Summary Log for completeness and accuracy of account code assignment prior to faxing to the Accounting Service. The items for deposit are then totaled and the total is recorded on the next line of the log.
3. The checks and summary are placed in the bank bag, in a locked file cabinets, until the Executive Director or his/her designated staff deposits them into the appropriate account at the bank.
4. The Executive Director deposits cash receipts directly to the appropriate bank account at XXXX Bank of XXX organization on a daily basis.
5. A copy of the deposit log and the deposit ticket from the bank is faxed to the Accounting Service on the next business day.
6. The Accounting Service will record the cash receipts into the XXX financial records and the cash flow projection to be forwarded to the Treasurer and Executive Director for the next Board of Directors meeting.

PETTY CASH POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide a procedure for managing petty cash.

ATTACHMENT: Petty Cash Summary

1. The amount deemed as "Petty Cash" shall be determined by the Executive Director and all purchases must be pre-approved by him/ her. Petty cash purchases are made for items of ten dollars (\$10) or under. Reference: XXX "Personnel Policies and Practices"—Petty Cash
2. Tax-exempt certification must be used when applicable.
3. Petty Cash shall be kept in a locked file cabinet. Access to petty cash shall be limited to the Executive Director and his/her appointed staff member and the XXX Treasurer.
4. When the Executive Director/ designated person receives money for petty cash items or disburses money from the petty cash fund, it shall be recorded on the Petty Cash Summary indicating the reason for money being received or disbursed and the receipt for that purchase. All transaction recorded will be initialed by the designated XXX person for money received or disbursement. (Note: form must be redone to adequately account for student purchases of books/notebooks and quantity, etc. and disbursement for supplies by xxx).
5. Any excess petty cash is deposited in the bank in accordance with the XXX cash receipts policy. Excess cash shall be an amount that is \$10 over the normal petty cash balance. Reference: "XXX Organizational By-Law," Article X, section 2 & 3. Petty cash shall be counted weekly and the balance recorded on the Petty Cash Summary and initialed by the staff person.
6. Petty cash is reimbursed with a check to Petty Cash generated by the appointed Accounting Services for XXX. Reimbursement must be approved by the Treasurer and accompanied with a pre-numbered purchase requisition with explanation of requirement.
7. Petty cash shall be audited once a month by the Treasurer of XXX and approved by the President. Petty cash audit files are kept in a designated cabinet at the XXX office.

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide a method to claim reimbursement for allowable travel and expenses.

ATTACHMENT: Expense Statement

1. Staff will fill out one (1) expense statement per month to claim reimbursement for work related mileage and travel expenses. Mileage will not include commute from home to work. Reference: Personnel Policies and Practices “Expense Reimbursement.” Provision of beverages, etc and Mileage reimbursement.
2. Mileage reimbursement for the use of employee’s personal vehicle in the performance of his/ her duties shall be paid at the established rate from the IRS. Mileage claimed will not include the distance from home to work.
3. Expense Statements for staff will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director. The Expense Statement for the Executive Director will be reviewed and approved by the Board President. If the Board President is unavailable, the Board Vice President, or other Board officer will make the approval/ disapproval decision.
4. Approved Expense Statements will be forwarded to the Accounting Service for reimbursement in accordance with accounts payable procedures.
5. Conferences and other trips further than 100 miles one (1) way from the XXX office require prior authorization by the Executive Director. The Executive Director’s travel request further than 100 miles one (1) way will require approval by a quorum of the Board of Directors.

PAYROLL POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide a procedure for the XXX payroll.

ATTACHMENTS: Employee Status Change Form
Timesheet
W-4 Withholding Certificate

REFERENCE: PERSONNEL Policies and Practices, XXX Organization

1. Hiring

- a. The XXX Board hires the Executive Director.
- b. The Executive Director hires all other employees.
- c. An Employee Status Change Form will be completed and signed by the Executive Director for all new hires, changes in pay, transfers, promotions, resignations, or other personnel actions. An Employee Status Change Form for the Executive Director will be completed based on the action of the XXX Board, as documented in the XXX approved Meeting Minutes. The original copy is forwarded to the Accounting Services for payroll actions.
- d. The Executive Director will ensure that each employee completes a **W-4 Withholding Certificate. The originals of these forms are placed in the Personnel File and copies are forwarded to the Accounting Services for payroll action.**

2. Payroll Payment

- a. Each employee shall complete a timesheet after each day worked.
- b. Employees will report hours twice a month, on the 15th (1st through 15th) and the 30th/ 31st (16th through 31st) of each month.
- c. Checks generated for payroll will be received by each employee on the 5th business day after submitting their timesheets.
- d. The Executive Director or their designee shall forward time sheets to the Accounting Services, within one (1) day of the end of the payroll period.
- e. The Accounting Service will process checks for timesheets received by the 1st and 16th of the month, respectively.
- f. XXX Board of Directors requires 2 authorized check signers.
- g. Time sheets for vacation taken may be completed prior to the vacation being taken. Completed and signed Timesheets shall be turned into the Executive Director on the last day the employee works during the payroll period.
- h. The Treasurer, in accordance with XXX check signing procedures, will sign payroll checks and forward them to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will deliver payroll checks by hand to each staff member.

3. Withholding

- a. Federal income tax and FICA will be deposited in accordance with IRS policy. The Accounting Service will prepare a check for the payment of these taxes and forward it to the Treasurer/Executive
- b. Director in accordance with accounts payable policies. The Executive Director is responsible for the timely deposit of the tax payment check to the First National Bank. The tax payment is due the 15th of the month following the activity.
- c. Michigan income taxes will be deposited at the end of each month, for activity during the preceding month, with the Michigan Treasury Department. Accounting Service will prepare a check for the payment of these taxes and forward it to the Treasurer/Executive Director in accordance with accounts payable policies. The Executive Director is responsible for the timely mailing of the tax payment check, by the end of the month. The tax payment is required to be postmarked by the last calendar day of the month following the activity.

4. Tax Reports

a. Federal

- i. The quarterly report is completed by the Accounting Service and forwarded to the Treasurer/Executive Director in order to meet the following deadlines.
- ii. The Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return is required to be filed on the following schedule:

<u>Quarter Ending</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
March 31	April 30
June 30	July 31
September 30	October 31
December 31	January 31

- b. W2 Forms reporting wages paid and taxes withheld for the calendar year are required to be delivered to employees by January 31. The Accounting Service will prepare the W2s and forward them to the Executive Director for distribution by January 31st.

5. Copy A of the W2 Forms will be prepared by the Accounting Service, for submission to the Social Security Administration signed by the Executive Director, along with Form W3, Transmittal of Income and Tax Statements, by the last day of February.

ASSETS AND DONATIONS POLICY

PURPOSE: To establish policies related to the management of property and maintenance of inventory.

ATTACHMENT: Example of Asset Listing

GENERAL

1. Personal or real property procured with XXX funds or transferred from programs designated for the sole usage of XXX must be used for those purposes authorized as such usage.
2. All such property must be properly maintained to keep it in good condition and safeguarded from loss, theft, or damage.
3. Prior Board of Directors approval is required for purchases or lease-purchase of non-expendable personal property with a unit acquisition cost of \$500 or more. Reference "Procurement" in the Finance Policies.
4. Donations in kind, services and property shall be recorded by the Finance Committee and maintained by the Accounting Service.
 - a. All donations in kind or services shall be recorded with a valuation of such donations in kind or services, determined by the current price of the donation or service.
5. Disposal of donated material or items shall be at the discretion of the Executive Director; however the disposal shall be communicated to the Finance Committee for updating of the files and the Auditing Service.

Property Control

1. The useful life expectancy of a fixed asset greater than one year and a cost of more than \$1,000 will be capitalized.
2. The useful life expectancy of a donated asset greater than one year and a cost of more than \$1,000 fair market value will be capitalized.
 - a. All donations with a fair market value of \$500 or greater will be recorded and maintained by the Finance Committee and forwarded to the Accounting Service for donation in kind purposes as well as recording assets obtained.
 - b. All material donations will be recorded by the Finance Committee and forwarded to the Accounting Service for recording donations in kind.
3. A property inventory register will be generated and maintained by the Accounting Service. Purchases will be added to the inventory upon receipt or payment of such goods.
4. The inventory register will include all items a unit acquisition of \$1,000 or more.
5. The inventory register will contain the following informations:
 - a. Description of the property
 - b. Serial number/ model number
 - c. Inventory Tag
 - d. Date received

- e. Acquisition source
 - f. Program or grant under which the purchase was made
 - g. Name of the holder
 - h. Location of the property
 - i. Condition of the property
6. Identification tags will be attached to all property on the register. Property tags are to be attached in an area as easily accessible as possible, but out of sight. Property tags will be numbered in a six digit sequence.
XX=program year, XX= program month, and XX= consecutive numbering beginning with 1.
7. An inventory will be conducted by the Finance Committee every 2 years.
- a. Missing property must be located and noted in the inventory register if destroyed or donated.

Audit of Assets

1. The Finance Committee will be responsible for the physical property inventory audit and may designate others to assist as required.
2. Obtain property inventory register from the Accounting Service prior to beginning of audit. This list should include the donated assets.
3. A property inventory sheet will be used to record inventory id, description of property, model or serial number, condition of asset and the date verified.
 - a. Locate and verify the inventory id tag for all the property being audited.
 - b. Record all information required on the inventory sheet. The donated items should be recorded separately from the other assets. Separate listing will insure differential between purchased and donated.
 - c. Record changes in condition of all items audited.
 - d. Inventory tags that have been removed or fallen off the item being audited will be replaced utilizing the same initial number.
 - e. Completed forms should be dated and forwarded to the Auditing Firm, retaining a copy for XXX.
4. At the time of the audit, and items that are obsolete, broken, and not repairable or are not utilized should be disposed of and recorded as such.

16) Staff Management

Personnel costs typically account for 60-70 percent of a nonprofit's total expense budget (1994, *Support Centers of America*). For this reason, successful management of staff members becomes a crucial component to the organization's success.

Staff management refers to the management of the organization's "human" resources. Proper management ensures that personnel policies and practices are applied fairly and consistently to protect and provide staff with a safe work environment conducive to productivity, that the organization is in compliance with local, state and federal laws, and that the organization's mission is supported by the employees that are hired.

It is essential for your organization to have solid staff in place to carry out programs and administrative functions. While volunteers can be helpful to an organization, depending on the size of your budget, future donors may question the commitment level of your staff if you rely too heavily on volunteers. The consensus among funders is that paid staff is more reliable than unpaid volunteers.

In a mature organization, there are three participants in staff management: the board, executive director and line managers. Line managers are managers who directly supervise the work of other staff.

In many smaller organizations, this responsibility will fall to the board and executive director. The role of the board is governance and the role of the executive director is management. Sometimes the roles can become blurred. In clarifying whose job it is, the board and the executive director must always keep in mind the board's legal responsibilities and liabilities as the employer.

Managing Staff

Managing staff involves two critical functions: staffing and supervision.

Staffing includes:

- deciding what "human resources" are needed to meet the organization's goals
- hiring (recruiting, screening and selecting) and terminating employees
- equipping new hires (via orienting, training, etc.)

Supervising is overseeing the progress and productivity of direct reports, often by:

- setting mutual goals and provide ongoing training
- conducting regular performance reviews
- ensuring sufficient rewards (compensation, benefits, etc.)

Often, organizations realize the need for a new employee when others continue to report being shorthanded, mention that certain tasks are not being done, are working overtime, etc. Ideally, planning for a new role should be done during strategic planning or when a new service is added to the organization. It's critical that organizations know what they want from their prospective employees. This not only allows them to secure the best person for the job but also insures that they are hiring employees that will move the mission of the organization forward. A good place for managers to start is by developing job descriptions.

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are lists of the general tasks, or functions, and responsibilities of a position. Typically, they also include to whom the position reports, specifications such

as the qualifications (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed by the person in the job, salary range for the position, etc. Typically, job descriptions are used especially for advertising to fill an open position, determining compensation and as a basis for performance reviews.

Do not seek job descriptions from other organizations and merely adopt those. Your open position is unique and job descriptions are very important. You should develop your own; the process of completing the job is usually enlightening.

Hiring (Recruiting, Screening and Selecting) Employees

Recruiting:

- Advertise the position by posting ads in classified sections of local major and neighborhood newspapers. In the ads, include the job title, general responsibilities, minimum skills and/or education required, whom they should send a résumé to if they are interested and a deadline. Consider having a closing date after which you won't accept résumés.

Screening:

When screening résumés, note:

- The candidate's career objective - or the lack of.
- If they stayed at jobs for a long period of time or left quickly. Are there holes in their work history?
- Their education and training. Is it appropriate for the new role? Consider what capabilities and skills might be evidenced by their past and current work activities.
- Consider routing résumés past key employees to collect their rankings. Interview all candidates that meet the minimum qualifications.

Selecting:

Send the job description to candidates before they come to the interview meeting.

- Interview the candidates.
- While interviewing candidates, always apply the same questions to all candidates to ensure fairness.
- All questions should be in regard to performing the duties of the job.
- Ask about their compensation needs and expected or needed benefits.
- Attempt to ask open-ended questions, i.e., avoid "yes-no" questions.

Do not ask questions about:

- race,
- nationality,
- age,
- gender,
- disabilities (current or previous),
- marital status,
- spouses,
- children and their care,
- criminal records or
- credit records.

Before making a final decision, contact a candidate's references, including previous employers, to ask some questions about the candidate's ability.

When you have decided on a likely candidate for the job and they accept, always follow-up with an offer letter, specifying the compensation, benefits and starting date. Reference an attached job description. Ask them to sign a copy of the offer letter and return it to you. Include a copy of this letter along with tax withholding forms, the job description and any benefit forms in their personnel file.

Consider including a six-month probationary period for the new position. If you do so, be sure to update your personnel policies to describe your organization's use of the probationary conditions. A probationary period allows you to fire an employee during the first six months if you have concerns and greatly decreases the chances you will be sued for wrongful termination.

Terminating Employees

Performance-related terminations inevitably arise because some employees cannot fulfill the requirements of their job. These situations can be risky. Employees sometimes react irrationally and lawsuits are a risk. A progressive discipline policy is a must. The policy must provide a process in which the employee is notified in writing of the performance problem(s) and it must allow a period of time for the employee to correct their performance problem (except for extreme behavioral problems, such as theft or violence). If the employee remains and their performance does not improve after a reasonable amount of time, inform them as politely as possible that it didn't work out and send them on their way. Document every step of the process as a defense against possible lawsuits

Equipping New Employees

Develop an employee orientation checklist and consider the following activities for inclusion on the list:

- Before the employee begins employment, send this individual a welcome letter verifying the starting date.
- When the employee begins employment, meet with him or her to explain the training process, introduce staff, sign any needed benefit and tax forms, and provide the employee's policies and procedure manual if the new employee did not receive one already.
- Tour the facilities.
- Schedule any needed computer training.
- Take the new employee to lunch on the first day and invite other employees along. Follow up at the end of the day to hear any questions or comments.
- Meet with the new employee during the first few days of employment to review the job description again. Review any specific goals for the position and explain the performance review procedure and provide a copy of the performance review document.

Supervisor Responsibilities

Set mutual goals and provide ongoing training.

Goals:

One of the common problems that managers experience is no clear, strong sense of whether their employees are really being effective or not. The first step toward solving this problem is to establish clear performance goals.

Despite the negative views that some employees can have about goals, they:

- provide clear direction to both manager and employee.
- form a common frame of reference around which the manager and employee can effectively communicate.
- clearly define "success."

Goals can be established for a variety of reasons, i.e., to overcome performance problems, qualify for future jobs and roles and/or give direction to training plans. Whatever the type of goal, it's critical that the employee have strong sense of ownership and commitment to achieving the goal. This can be achieved by having the manager and employee work together to identify the needed/desired goals.

Training:

Employee job training can be instituted for various reasons:

- a performance appraisal indicates performance improvement is needed
- as part of an overall professional development program
- as part of succession planning
- to train about a specific topic

There are four basic types of training:

- Self-Directed Learning
 - Self-directed learning is where the learner decides what he or she will learn and how.
- Other-Directed Learning
 - Other-directed learning is where other people decide what the learner will learn and how.
- Informal Training
 - Informal training has no predetermined form. This is probably the most common type of training and includes on-the-job training, coaching from supervisors, using manuals and procedures, advice from peers, etc.
- Formal Training
 - Formal training has a predetermined form. The form usually includes specification of learning results, learning objectives and activities that will achieve the results, and how the training will be evaluated. Examples are college courses, workshops and seminars.

Conduct regular performance reviews. Measuring employee performance has come a long way from the annual performance review to an ongoing performance management process. In the past, managers and employees met once a year for the annual performance review to look back at the work done during the previous year and to evaluate what was accomplished. In recent years, there has been a shift away from performance reviews to a more comprehensive approach called performance management.

Performance management is an ongoing process where the manager/supervisor and employee work together to plan, monitor and review an employee's work objectives or goals and overall contribution to the organization.

Performance management starts with a work plan that identifies for the employee what is to be accomplished and how. The plan is followed up with informal, ongoing monitoring and feedback on his/her progress towards the objectives set in the plan. At the end of the performance period - usually a year - the manager and employee meet to summarize the accomplishments and challenges of the past year and document the discussion using a performance management form.

Ensure sufficient rewards. Don't just count on cultivating strong interpersonal relationships with employees to help motivate and retain them. Instead, use reliable and comprehensive systems in the workplace to help. For example, establish organizational policies and procedures, compensation systems and employee performance systems to support employee motivation and retention. Also, establishing various systems and structures helps ensure clear understanding and equitable treatment of employees.

A General Human Resources checklist is located on the following page.

Sources:

McNamara, Carter. Field Guide to Leadership and Supervision. Authenticity Consulting, LLC. Copyright 1997-2007.

http://www.managementhelp.org/staffing/specify/job_desc/job_desc.htm

www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/sup_mod/staff.htm

Foundation Center:

<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/establish/staff.html>

Resources:

Screening Applicants: www.managementhelp.org/staffing/screeng/screeng.htm

Interviewing Job Applicants:

www.managementhelp.org/staffing/screeng/intrvwng/intrvwng.htm

Selecting (Hiring) New Employees:

www.managementhelp.org/staffing/selectng/selectng.htm

Job Offers: http://www.managementhelp.org/staffing/selectng/job_offr/job_offr.htm

Example Performance Management Forms:
www.performancereview.com/pfasp/excleri.asp

The Nonprofit Good Practice Guide:
www.npgoodpractice.org

Staff Screening Tool Kit 3rd Edition: www.nonprofitrisk.org/library/factsheets/screening.shtml

"It Pays to Help New Staff Start Right"
www.businessknowhow.com/manage/newstaffstartright.htm

HR Management Toolkit:
<http://www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/home.cfm>

Employment Law Guide for Non-Profit Organizations:
www.probonopartnership.org/PBPGuide/frame.htm

"Human Resource Management: Best Practices for Nonprofits"
www.wcnwebsite.org/practices/resources.htm

General Human Resources

Rating *	Indicator	Met	Needs Work	N/A
E	1. The organization has a written personnel handbook/policy that is regularly reviewed and updated: a) to describe the recruitment, hiring, termination and standard work rules for all staff; b) to maintain compliance with government regulations including Fair Labor Standards Act, Equal Employment Opportunity Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Family Leave Act, Affirmative Action Plan (if required), etc.			
R	2. The organization follows nondiscriminatory hiring practices.			
R	3. The organization provides a copy of or access to the written personnel policy to all members of the board, the Executive Director and all staff members. All staff members acknowledge in writing that they have read and have access to the personnel handbook/policies.			
R	4. The organization has job descriptions including qualifications, duties, reporting relationships and key indicators.			
R	5. The organization's Board of Directors conducts an annual review/evaluation of its Executive Director in relationship to a previously determined set of expectations.			
R	6. The Executive Director's salary is set by the Board of Directors in a reasonable process and is in compliance with the organization's compensation plan.			
R	7. The organization requires employee performance appraisals to be conducted and documented at least annually.			
A	8. The organization has a compensation plan, and a periodic review of salary ranges and benefits is conducted.			
A	9. The organization has a timely process for filling vacant positions to prevent an interruption of program services or disruption to organization operations.			
A	10. The organization has a process for reviewing and responding to ideas, suggestions, comments and perceptions from all staff members.			
A	11. The organization provides opportunities for employees' professional development and training with their job skill area and also in such areas as cultural sensitivity and personal development.			
A	12. The organization maintains contemporaneous records documenting staff time in program allocations.			
Indicators ratings: E=essential; R=recommended; A=additional to strengthen organizational activities				

Be sure to read **How to Use this Tool** and **Disclaimer** at

www.managementhelp.org/org_eval/uw_hr.htm before using information in this document. Edited by Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD.

Helpful Website Resources on Forming a Nonprofit

- Information, including professional development and starting a nonprofit can be found on the **Michigan Non-Profit Association** website: www.mnaonline.org
- The start-up section of **Idealist's Nonprofit FAQ** offers advice and links to helpful information:
www.idealists.org/if/idealists/en/FAQ/CategoryViewer/default?category-edi21-74
- The **Internal Revenue Service** has a comprehensive discussion of the requirements for tax-exempt status and recognition as a charity in the "Exempt Organizations" section of its website:
<http://www.irs.gov/charities/index.html>
- The **IRS** (like the UK Charities Commission) has a page on the lifecycle of a charitable organization.
<http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=169727,00.html>
- On the **IRS** site, there is also a page with links to state government sites with information about nonprofit corporations and other local laws and regulations:
<http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=129028,00.html>
- **About.com** contains information about how to start a nonprofit:
www.nonprofit.about.com
- **Michigan Nonprofit Association** has basic start-up resources:
<http://www.mnaonline.org/starting.asp>
- The **Free Management Library's** link on **Starting a Nonprofit Organization** helps you answer the following questions:
 - Should your new business really be a nonprofit?
 - What services will your nonprofit provide? Is it needed? By whom? Really?
 - How will your nonprofit be designed? Who will it involve? Who will work for whom?
 - Do you have what it takes to start and run a new organization?
 - If so, then what specific steps are involved in starting a nonprofit?www.mapnp.org/library/strt_org/prep.htm
and
www.mapnp.org/library/strt_org/strt_np/strt_np.htm
- Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, an association of foundations that give special emphasis to nonprofit management, has a guide for funders considering support to a start-up organization on its website. The issues raised in this guide are things anyone investing time, thought or money in a new organization will want to think about:
www.goefunders.org/uploads/documents/life/startupassessmenttool.pdf

Programming

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Programming

There are many varieties of programming available throughout the State of Michigan. This section will go over programming options, including an overview of various methods of delivery, the objectives for this type of instruction, needed resources and evaluation tools.

Listed below are some of the programming options:

- One-to-One Adult Tutoring (Literacy and/or ESOL)
- Classes/ Small Group Instruction
 - ESOL Class
 - Small Group/ Specialty Instruction
- Family Literacy
- Workplace Literacy/ Workforce Development
- Corrections Education in Jails
- Computer-Aided Instruction
- Child/School-age Literacy Tutoring

Reaching the low-literate population takes innovation, adaptability, and commitment.

1) One-to-One Adult Tutoring

One-to-one tutoring is very effective for the adult who has not experienced success in the classroom environment. The trust that is built in the tutoring dynamic is critical to building up the self-esteem needed for the adult to move forward. Elements to this type of program include the following:

- Volunteer Recruiting
- Tutor Training
- Adult Learner Recruitment
- Assessing learner for proficiency levels and goal setting
- Matching the adult learner with a tutor
- Establishing regular meeting time and place for the learning team (typically 1 ½ to 2 hours once a week)
- Providing appropriate instructional materials/ curriculum
- Supporting the tutor's efforts and on-going professional development
- Monitoring the learner's progress
- Recognizing the accomplishments of the match

Success is realized when the instruction is learner-centered with an adult-oriented curriculum that includes multi-sensory instruction. Confidential and private instruction that is provided in a comfortable setting creates an environment conducive to learning. The adult learner will retain the information if it is meaningful, there is a connection to

achieving the adult's goals, the adult's learning style is taken into consideration, and the material is contextual.

Depending on the program, staff members may be full or part-time, paid or volunteer. A staff member that oversees the logistics is the program coordinator. The coordinator's primary role is to match the tutors with the learners and oversee their progress. Often, this person is also responsible for recruiting and training the new tutors, evaluating/assessing learners, record-keeping of progress and outcomes, and choosing/creating curriculum and lesson plans. Although providing these services for free is an optimal goal, the learner also needs to have the sense of ownership. This can be done by charging a minimal fee or asking that they purchase the material they use or in some way give back to the literacy efforts.

Other things to consider include:

- For the ESL/ESOL learner, conversational themes create opportunity for additional practice
- Multi-level or multiple levels of group instruction
- Have services available where learners can get to using public transportation
- Class scheduling that accommodates the shift/work schedules of local manufacturers and industries
- Waiting list – small group classes may be beneficial when the learner waiting list exceeds the tutor volunteers available.
- For the ESL/ESOL learner -
 - Classes provide additional opportunities to “hear” spoken English
 - Classes provide opportunities to practice speaking English with a variety of people
 - Learners may be at different levels of English proficiency
 - Topics include American current and cultural events
- Citizenship Classes:
 - Classes prepare the immigrant learner for the naturalization test and interview.
 - Classes include content on the three parts of the test:
 - United States government and history (100 questions)
 - English reading and writing of sentences
 - Oral English proficiency
 - Volunteers can teach the classes
 - Classes may offer assistance in completing naturalization forms.
- Curriculum Development- The literacy organization and instructors work together to develop materials and methods for instruction. This is ongoing as needs and objectives are identified and modified during the instructional process. Incorporate relative and authentic materials (newspapers, menus, job applications, health-care forms) as much as possible into the curriculum.

- Instruction- Instruction is delivered according to the timeline/schedule determined by the literacy organization. Class progress and outcomes are reported. Post-testing of learners and instructor feedback are documented.

At the end of a class cycle, the instructor and literacy organization can determine whether to continue instruction with the same learners, start additional classes with new learners, or discontinue class instruction.

2) ESOL/ESL Classes

In many areas of the United States, there is such a great demand for English instruction that literacy organizations have had to add English classes. The motivation of the ESL learner can be different from the Adult Basic Education learner. The stigma attached to their lack of mastery of the English language is not the same, yet there could be a greater struggle to communicate, particularly if the learner is just beginning to develop their skills with the English language.

Facilitating a new immigrant's command of the English language begins with addressing basic survival skills. The following are some suggestions for beginning ESL/ESOL learners:

- Working on basic student information is a beginning step. Have the learner dictate information about themselves such as the student's names, phone number, and address. These activities can provide interesting, meaningful content while developing encoding skills. Tactile activities such as drawing the letters in sand with the fingers, coloring letters, or manipulating plastic cutouts of letters may offer some variety.
- Completing thoughts through dialogues and manipulatives. Learners supply the missing words in written dialogue or substitute different vocabulary words in structured dialogues, sentence strips, role plays, or dictations.
- Build vocabulary using activities such as matching pictures to words, using flash cards, concentration games, labeling, vocabulary journals, picture dictionaries, and bingo activities to practice vocabulary.
- In a class-room setting, have learners ask the other students one or two questions such as, "What month were you born?" or "Where were you born?" and record the answers on a form. The class can debrief the answers to make a chart or graph. If learner names are gathered, the list can be used for alphabetizing practice. A second type of survey asks learners to find "someone who likes football" or "someone who comes from Bolivia." To find the information, learners may need to introduce themselves, or if they know each other they can go directly into a social acknowledgement asking questions such as "What is your favorite sport?" and record the information on a form. Class

surveys are useful for community building as well as for practicing the four language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

- Language Experience Approach (LEA) is a very practical tool for developing language skills for the new English speaker. Based on a picture or student story, the tutor records as the learner dictates. Other activities based on the learner-generated text follow, such as vocabulary development, phonics exercises, choral reading or dictation.
- Exercises such as creating words by changing the consonants (e.g. pop/cop or pan/man) or identifying initial word sounds are important components of literacy-level lessons. Relating such exercises to the vocabulary being taught in a lesson contextualizes the learning and makes it relevant. Use resources that are typically part of the learner's experience, such as a newspaper or work brochure. This connects the lesson to real life situations.

Resources:

www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/faqs.html

Below is a list of recommended publishing companies and websites that offer adult ESOL curriculum. Many more are available.

New Readers Press: www.newreaderspress.com

Steck-Vaughn: www.steckvaughn.harcourtachieve.com

Alta Publications: www.altaesl.com

Delta Systems: www.delta-systems.com

ESL-Lounge: www.esl-lounge.com/premium/why-join.php

The following links contain excellent examples of ESOL curriculum, lesson plans, learner inventories, and teaching methodology that will be useful to a program manager or an ESOL instructor:

www.wvabe.org/tcher_handbook_pdf

www.esl.about.com/cs/teachingtechnique/ht/ht_eslcurr.htm

www.esl.about.com/od/teachingbeginners/a/ab_beg_intro.htm

www.arlington.k12.va.us/instruct

www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources

Resources:

The state of West Virginia has an excellent handbook for teaching ESOL:

www.wvabe.org/tcher_handbook_pdf/section14.pdf

www.eastsideliteracy.org/tutorsupport/ESL/TalkTime.htm#oldtopicsiteslj.org/questions

www.esljunction.com/conversation_questions/index.html

www.goenglish.com/Onefortheroad.aspe.sl.about.com/od/conversationlessonplans/conversation_lesson_plans_for_english_learners_at_all_levels.htm

Citizenship Classes/Resources:

www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis

www.themlc.org/citizenshippresourcesaenet.esuhd.org/citizenship_lessons/citizen/prac.html

- Financial Literacy Classes:
 - Classes prepare learners to make sound financial decision in their everyday lives.
 - Classes contain units on:
 - Banking system
 - Checking and savings accounts
 - Budgeting
 - Investments
 - Money scams
 - Mortgages
 - Credit cards
 - Interest rates and more
 - Classes are sometimes collaborative programs with a literacy organization and a financial institution.
 - The instructor should have a financial/banking background

Resources:

www.floridatechnet.org/inservice/esol2/home.html

www.nscsall.net/index.php?id=899

www.healthliteracy.owrldeed.org/docs/culture

www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/curricula.html

www.askme3.org

www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/health/healthindex.html

- HSD/GED Classes:
 - Classes prepare a learner to pass the individual subject tests to obtain a high school credential.
 - Instruction usually incorporates computerized curriculum in a lab setting.
 - Several learners may be enrolled at one time.
 - Learners work on their own individualized lessons.
 - Some group instruction occurs when learners work on the same areas (i.e. geometry).

Resources:

www.dpi.wi.gov/ged_hsed/gedhsed.html

www.curriculumbank.org/curriculumbank/index

- Remedial Writing Workshops:
 - Learners may be at different levels.
 - Spelling strategies are often included.
 - Skills taught are based on learners' needs.
 - Goals range from mastering cursive writing to writing letters/stories to writing and editing essay/ research papers.
 - A learner writing portfolio is often the end result.

Resources:

www.theteacherscorner.net/daily-writing-prompts/December/index.htm

www.dailygrammar.com/archive.shtml

www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=339

www.idonline.org/article/c653

Specialty classes can meet the special needs of learners.

- Book Discussions:
 - Discussions provide opportunities to read quality literature and provide oral language practice, critical reading, and group dynamic experiences.
 - Books selected are appropriate for the learners (i.e. adult-oriented themes. Culturally sensitive, appropriate reading levels).
 - Learners can read books on their own, in class, or with their tutors.
 - The group meets monthly (or other specified times).
 - Study guides are recommended.
 - A group discussion is needed (and may come from another organization such as a library, university, or school).

Resources:

www.multcolib.org/talk/start.html

www.nhhc.org/connections.php

www.wisconsinhumanities.org/grants/guide.html

www.manitowoc.lib.wi.us/readers/guides/bookdiscussionkits.htm

Computer classes can be self-paced.

- Computer Classes
 - Classes focus on developing computer skill vs. using a computer as an instructional tool in teaching reading.
 - Classes may introduce:
 - Keyboarding (Mavis Beacon)
 - Word processing (Microsoft Word)
 - Spreadsheets (Excel)
 - Creating presentations (PowerPoint)
 - Using e-mail

- Computers, software, and Internet hook-up are needed.
- Instructors have training experience in addition to computer/data processing experience.
- Class may be a self-paced lab or a scheduled class.
- A “project” is often the outcome of the class.

Resources:

www.literacy.kent.edu/Midwest/materials/ndakota/complit/toc.html

www.internet4classrooms.com/on-line.htm

www.tech.worlded.org/docs/cia/index.htm

ProLiteracy America- Online Information Center
1320 Jamesville Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
315.422.9121
Fax: 315.422.6369
Web site: www.proliteracy.org

3) Family Literacy

Parents are their children's first and most important teachers. A parent who struggles with literacy and basic life skills has limited resources for facilitating their children's learning. Thus, a parent's literacy skills directly impact the literacy skills and success of their children. Family literacy is a means to break the destructive cycle of poverty by utilizing a holistic approach to improving literacy.

The Family Literacy approach offers families educational opportunities so that every member is able to improve literacy and life skills. This approach integrates adult literacy education, early childhood education, and parenting education into one program.

In family literacy, the entire family is the student.

Family literacy programs strive to provide services that integrate the following activities:

- Adult Literacy Education- Provides parents with basic skills (including English), life skills, and the opportunity to earn a high school credential.
- Early Childhood Education- Provides opportunities for children to learn from birth and focuses on the education of very young children from birth through age 8. Family literacy programs emphasize children's eventual success in school and highlights the areas of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- Parent Education- Provides parents with a wide variety of learning topics including parenting strategies to support their children's learning.
- Interactive Literacy Activities- Provide a time "to increase and facilitate meaningful parent-child interactions focused primarily on language and literacy development in a high-quality learning environment where they can learn and play together." (Jacobs, 2004, p. 197). This is often referred to as "PACT time"- **P**arent **a**nd **C**hild **T**ogether.
- Home Visits- Provide a means for delivering literacy instruction in a familiar setting and to emphasize that parents are the child's first and most important teacher.

Resources:

www.tei.education.txstate.edu/famlit.htm

<http://www.famlit.org/ncfl-and-family-literacy/what-is-family-literacy>

Benefits of family literacy:

- Parents are motivated to help their children
- Creates a new family tradition of reading and learning
- May provide opportunities for community partnerships
- Parents help their children by reading to them; children help their parents practice reading by listening

- Parents in family literacy programs can become more confident interacting with their children's teachers
- Children whose parents are involved do better in school
- Children who are read to are more likely to become readers

Resources:

For examples of family literacy program, program evaluation tools and lesson plans and activities: www.familyliteracyexpertise.org

For information on MotherRead/FatherRead family literacy book discussions:

www.wisconsinhumanities.org/motherread.html

For information about "Parents as Educational Partners," a family literacy curriculum:

www.thecenterweb.org/alrc/family-pep.html#about

4) Workplace Literacy/Workforce Development

Workplace literacy can have a profound impact on a business' ability to be agile and competitive. Workplace literacy programs focus on basic skills that workers need to retain present jobs, advance in their careers, or increase productivity. Curricula are developed by educators working with employers and employee groups to determine what reading, computation, speaking, and reasoning skills are required to perform job tasks effectively.

Benefits of Workplace Literacy efforts include:

- Improve communication between employees and management
- Increase employee retention and promotion
- Reduce errors
- Improve safety
- Increased productivity
- Increased profits

In general, the majority of workplace literacy programs collaborating with nonprofit literacy organizations have these characteristics:

- Offered at worksite or at a designated facility during agreed upon times (such as on Saturday mornings or at times when employee is off duty)
- No cost to the employee
- Voluntary participation
- Contracted instructor (provided by literacy organization)
- Employer-specific topics included in instruction
- Pre- and post-assessment of participants

Employers who participated in The Conference Board's *Turning Skills into Profit* (1999) study of 25 workplace education programs across the United States identified the following as key workplace basic skills:

Literacy Skills

- Improved understanding and ability to use "documents" such as safety instructions, assembly directions, or maps.
- Improved understanding and ability to use "numbers" by themselves or in charts and tables.
- Improved understanding and ability to use "prose writing" such as reports, letters, and manuals.

Other Basic Skills

- Improved ability to listen, understand, learn, analyze, and apply information
- Better ability to communicate by using English in the workplace

- Improved capacity to think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems, and make decisions
- Improved ability to use computers and other technology, instruments, tools, and information systems effectively

New Attitudes

- Greater willingness and ability to learn for life
- More positive attitude toward change

Working with Others

- Better ability to build and work in teams
- Improved understanding and willingness to work within the culture of the group

Resources:

For more information on Workplace Basic Skills identified in The Conference Board's report:

www.conferenceboard.ca/education/pdf/skills_profits.pdf

The designing of the program consists of these four steps:

1. **Needs Analysis-** The literacy organization meets with representatives from a company to determine company and employee needs and set training objectives. Site, fees, and timeline are negotiated at this time.
2. **Skills Assessment-** Employees/ learners are evaluated by the literacy organization to determine skill levels and type of instruction needed to meet training objectives.
3. **Curriculum Development-** The literacy organization and company representatives work together to develop materials and methods for delivering training. Some curriculum development happens before the instruction begins, but it is ongoing as needs and objectives are identified and modified during the instructional process. As much as possible, authentic materials from the work site are incorporated into the curriculum.
4. **Instruction-** Instruction/ training is delivered according to the timeline/ schedule determined by the company and literacy organization. Class progress and outcomes are reported. Post-testing of learners and company feedback are documented.

Assessment is an important part of success analysis.

When the instruction has concluded, the company and literacy organization can determine whether to continue the instruction with the same learners, start additional classes with new learners, or discontinue classes.

Resources:

For more information on developing a workplace literacy program:

www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digest/planningqu.html and

www.work-basedlearning.org

5) Corrections Education in County Jails

While state correctional facilities will provide in-house literacy, ABE, GED/HSD, and English instruction programming for their inmates, most county jails do not. This may be due to budget concerns, indefinite or short-term stay of their residents or the work-release status of some residents. An opportunity to provide these services may exist within your county.

Programs vary with the needs of the county jail inmates. Some programs offer exclusively one-to-one tutoring geared to the needs of the inmates. This may be provided by volunteer or paid tutors through the technical college system. Other programs may offer class instructors leading small group or lab type instruction. Or, programs may offer a combination of both. In some jails, HSED instruction is provided through the local school district for inmates under the age of 21.

Some of the programming that may be offered includes:

- GED/HSED
- Basic education skills
- ESOL/ESL
- Vocational Education
- Financial Literacy
- Computer Literacy
- Book Club
- Writing Class
- Family Literacy
- Inmate Peer Tutoring

Perhaps the most challenging issue with programming in a county jail is that inmates are usually there for a short time. They may be in jail waiting to be sentenced to prison, they may be serving their entire sentence in jail, or they may be placed on Huber work release. Until they have their day in court, they do not know how long they will be in jail. The jail cannot give you that information either. So, the biggest challenge is that your learners may be here one day and gone the next, without warning.

Tutoring county jail inmates can be very rewarding, but there are some risks involved in working within a correctional setting. All tutors should receive a facility tour and training related to the facility rules and expectations prior to starting their tutor assignment. All volunteers are required to follow rules within the facility when interacting with inmates and it is critical to adhere to those rules for their own safety and well being. Tutors must be capable of maintaining a professional relationship with their students at all times. Program managers should be aware that the "lock down" setting of a county jail does not suit all potential tutors. Volunteers who tend to be

claustrophobic should be discouraged from working in a jail or other correctional setting.

Another challenge is that sleeping can be an attractive activity for inmates to help pass the time. Therefore, it is best not to schedule programming early in the morning.

Many tutors and instructors consider programming in jail the most rewarding setting for helping another person. Most of the learners in your program have not had a lot of exposure to the goodwill of others. Therefore, they tend to be very grateful for any kind word or positive re-enforcement directed toward them. Jail tends to be a very negative atmosphere and, therefore, the opportunity to provide a positive atmosphere is like a ray of sunshine for them. Generally, inmates are motivated to attend class since it is one positive thing happening in their lives and an opportunity to change the direction of their lives. Since boredom is often the greatest challenge for inmates, a change in their daily routine is considered positive.

Resources:

For information on Volunteer Services and programs in Michigan Department of Corrections, see article #3.02.105 (01/09/89), on the web at:

http://mich.gov/documents/corrections/03_02_105_180927_7.pdf

For more information on family literacy programming in corrections:

www.nald.ca/fulltext/hudson/bringing/cover.htm

6) Computer-aided Instruction

Success in any venue requires basic computer literacy. In a one-to-one tutoring environment, these may mean helping the tutor become comfortable with using computer-aided instruction in addition to the learner. Computer-aided instruction can be used to supplement classroom and/or one-to-one instruction. It can be used as a stand-alone method of instruction via Web-based components or computer software.

Benefits of computer-aided instruction:

- Can be used as a step toward job training and/or employment
- Increase the reach of literacy instruction by potentially meeting the needs of learners who have barriers such as work schedules, transportation issues, and child care challenges in their lives
- Presents opportunities for increased study time
- Creates a more interactive form of instruction
- Enhances existing programming
- Increases critical thinking skills
- Allows customization and includes curriculum that addresses student interests

- Accommodates disabilities; speech recognition software can include aspects that works with learning disabilities
- Incorporates practical applications that peak the learner's interest. For example, a learner could research a topic including a favorite hobby of theirs.
- The language experience approach can be successfully used with ESOL/ESL instruction on a computer
- Spreadsheets and math programs can free up some learners from tedious calculations to allow them to focus on understanding the concepts behind the math problems

To be most effective, computer-aided instruction must go hand in hand with tutoring. Discussion should take place before and after a computer-based assignment, as it would be with book instruction. Not all learners do well with computer-aided instruction. A limitation of computer-aided instruction is that computer software is usually not written by programmers who understand adult learning theory. Therefore, it is important to carefully review any software that you are recommending for learner use.

Resources:

For more information about computer-aided instruction:

www.ncsall.net/?id=303

www.tech.worlded.org/docs/cia

www.projectideal.org/pdf/other_print_resources/op_askov.pdf

www.proectideal.org/idealpublications.htm

For other online resources:

www.thinkfinity.org

www.proliteracy.org/proliteracy_america/ind_aff_only/links.asp

7) Measuring Program Outcomes and Success

The most effective way to understand if a program is successful is by measuring outcomes. Certainly, looking at feedback can give you a general sense of how well-received your programming is, but a program evaluation will give you the specific information that will allow you to make whatever changes are necessary to best serve your learners and the community. Evaluations can provide the data that is necessary to determine the effectiveness of your program and the necessity of your program in the community, as well as supply information to determine if your program is one that funders want to support in the future.

Benefits to measuring the program's outcomes and success:

- As a program provider, you can identify processes that work and processes that don't work by their outcomes and adjust the program accordingly
- These measurements are important to stakeholders which can also play a role in grant writing
- Measurements are necessary for receiving government assistance

A popular outcome measurement tool is the Program Logic Model. Ideally the Program Logic Model identifies key program elements and crystallizes how these elements are expected to relate to each other. There are three components:

- **Inputs** - the resource, contributions and investments that go into responding to the need.
- **Outputs** - the activities, services, events, and products that reach people being served and the surrounding community
- **Outcomes** - which are degrees of benefit or change that the program made in the lives of the participant

Outcomes look at the changes that have happened as a result of programming and compare it all to what the target changes were. Outcomes are measurable. They can include the numbers of learners or tutors, realized goals, or the number of learners who attend more than so many hours of instruction or computer time. Keep in mind, however, that there are intangible outcomes that should also be tracked. Make sure to include narratives that speak to outcomes such as improved learner confidence, better rapport with the community, increased volunteer satisfaction, and learner's increased involvement with community.

Behaviors or changes in the participants that can be measured to indicate that this outcome has occurred can include:

- Post-testing that indicates learner has advanced a level

- Attaining personal goals, such as obtaining employment, improving employment, purchasing a home, reading to children, entering post-secondary educational program, etc.
- Completion of graded curriculum (i.e., completing skill books that relate to a reading/grade level)
- Hours of instruction

Keep track of various information concerning your volunteers and learners. Include demographic information:

- Gender
- Age
- Marital status
- Literacy or ESOL/ESL
- Primary language
- Race/ ethnicity
- Education level
- Employment status
- Income level
- Income level (for learners only)

Dates are also important:

- Entry date
- Date matched/ started class
- Date exited
- Reason individual left program
- Length of time in program

This information will not only benefit the program as you do a self-evaluation of its success, it is also necessary when completing Proliteracy America's and the State of Michigan's annual report. This data will give you foundational information that can be used in grant writing, and is a step towards the more comprehensive reporting needed in the Program Outcomes Logic Model.

Let's recap the success measurements:

- **Post-testing of learners-** Test scores of learners after instruction show gains in the area on which instruction was focused (English proficiency, math, writing, etc.). These tests would be standardized, norm-referenced assessment tools. These tools are recommended by the National Recording System (NRS). This includes assessments such as TABE or CASAS for low-literate learners or Best PLUS for English Language Learners. These assessments are given in regular intervals, the guidelines being given in the directions for assessing. For smaller

organizations with limited staff and resources, tracking progress using other evaluation methods, such as textbook correlations to the NRS guidelines, is encouraged.

- **Curriculum Completion-** The texts and curriculum in which the learner had been placed and then completed are documented. This would also include curriculum placement tests and textbook post-tests.
- **Instructional hours/attendance-** Learners demonstrated satisfaction of and need for instruction by meeting tutors regularly. The numbers of instructional hours are recorded.
- **Goals Achieved-** Each learner has identified personal goals upon entry of program and achievement of these are documented when they occur.
- **Tutor Feedback-** A survey can be distributed to tutors to determine whether learners have increased their current level of skills or gained new skills.
- **Learner Feedback-** A learner completes a skills inventory before and then after instruction to determine the areas in which skills have improved.
- **Learner Portfolio-** Various materials (i.e., tests, writing samples, inventories, teacher observations) are collected to give a complete picture of a learner's progress and achievements.

For workplace literacy, you may consider these additional items:

- **Company feedback-** A survey can be distributed to company officials and direct supervisors to determine whether employees have increased their current level of skills or gained new skills.
- **Employee feedback** Employees indicate whether they believe skills have improved or whether they are pleased with the outcome of the instruction.
- **Long-term outcomes-** These can also include data regarding reduced absenteeism, reduced errors on safety violations, increased productivity, improved employee team-work and other like factors.

The frequency necessary for reviewing these outcomes depends on the program that you are evaluating. If it is a 12-week workplace literacy class, you will need to do a pre-program evaluation of the learners' skills and then a post-evaluation at the end of the class to determine how effective it was. If it is your one-to-one tutoring program, you may find that smaller evaluations every six months to a year may be adequate to make sure you are continuing on the right track and to head off any potential issues before they mushroom into significant problems. More comprehensive evaluations can then coincide with your organization's strategic planning effort.

Resources:

“A Practical Introduction to Program Evaluation” by Yolanda J. Numm:
www.canonprofits.org/Canalert/sept.oct.01/practical.html

Basic Guide to Outcomes-Based Evaluation for Nonprofit Organizations with Very Limited Resources:
www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/outcomes.htm

Basic Guide to Program Evaluation:
www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn./fnl_eval.htm

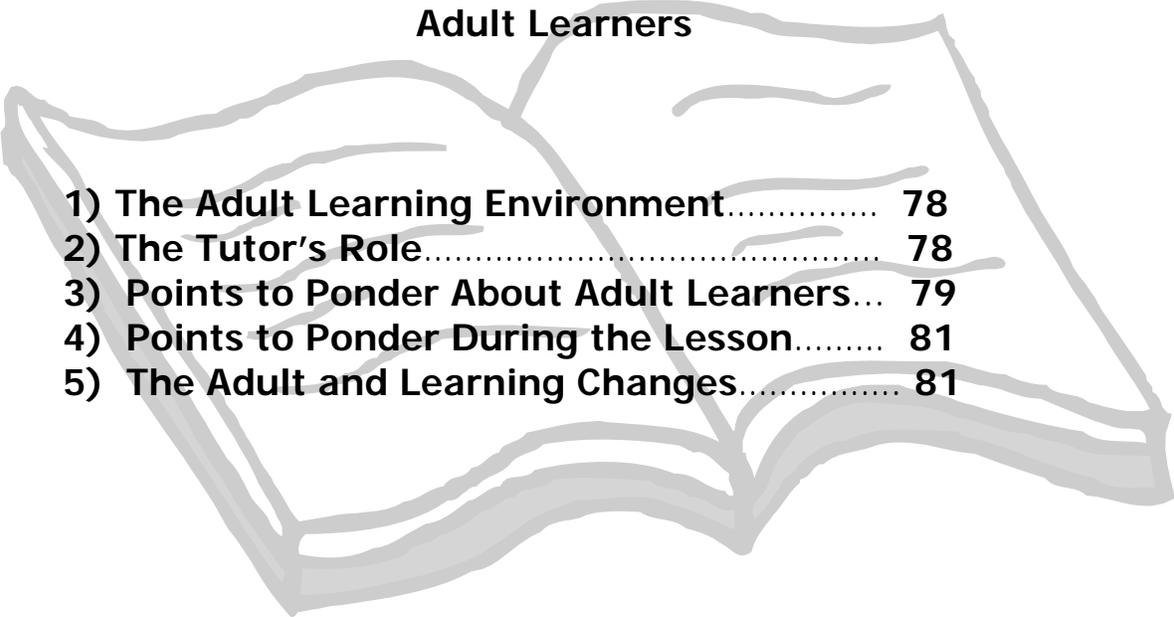
“Measuring the Difference Volunteers Make: A guide to outcome evaluation for volunteer program managers” from Minnesota Department of Human Services:
www.serviceleader.org/new/managers/files/measuring-the-difference-2005.pdf

For more information and examples of program outcomes and measurement:
www.national.unitedway.org/outcomes
www.organizationalresearch.com/glossary.htm
www.sfu.ca/~tcopley/pro/eval/plm_ppt/index.htm
www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/outcomes.htm
www.managementhelp.org/noprogs/np_mod/org_frm.htm
www.hmrp.net/canadianoutcomesinstitute/resources.htm

For information or to order the Equipped for the Future tool kit:
www.eff.cls.utk.edu/resources/home.htm

For information on conducting a program evaluation or creating a program evaluation tool for family literacy programming, see: “A” is for Assessment: A Primer Program Evaluation” at:
www.nsba.org/site/doc_EDLO.asp?trackid=&did=11678&cid=936

Adult Learners

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Adult Learners

Literacy Councils will need to develop a model for training Tutors to work with adults. Adult learners have some specific needs and ways of learning that differ from the way a child may learn. Below are some points to consider when working with adults.

1) The Adult Learning Environment

The learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression and acceptance of differences.

The learners perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals.

The learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore, have a feeling of commitment toward it.

The learners participate actively in the learning process.

The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learners.

The learners have a sense of progress toward their goals.

2) The Tutor's Role

The tutor exposes students to new possibilities

The tutor helps each student clarify his/her own aspirations for improved behavior.

The tutor helps each student diagnose the gap between his/her aspiration and his/her present level of performance.

The tutor helps each student identify the life problems he/she experience because of the gaps between his/her aspirations and his/her present level of performance.

The tutor provides a physical setting that is comfortable and conducive to interaction.

The tutor accepts each student as a person of worth and respects his/her feelings and ideas. People are more important than the information to be learned or the techniques to be used.

The tutor seeks to build a relationship of mutual trust and helpfulness with the student by encouraging cooperative activities and refraining from inducing competitiveness and being judgmental.

The tutor involves the student in a mutual process of forming learning objectives.

The tutor shares his/her thinking about options available in the designing of the learning experiences and the selection of materials and methods. The tutor involves the student in deciding among these options.

The tutor helps the students explore their own experiences as resources for learning through the use of such techniques as discussion, role playing, case method, etc.

The tutor gears the presentation of his/her own resources to the levels of experience of his/her particular students.

The tutor helps the students to apply new learning, and thus to make the learning more meaningful and integrated.

Significant learning takes place when goals have cognitive, affective and motoric aspects: in other words, involving all of the senses in learning.

The tutor helps the students develop and apply procedures for self-evaluation according to these criteria. Each person participating in the teaching-learning situation has a responsibility for its success or failure.

Evaluation should be a constant process in the teaching-learning situation.

3) Points to Ponder About Adult Learners

Adults are different than children as learners in very critical ways:

Whereas children are dependent, adults are self-directed. To be treated as an adult in adult learning experiences, there should be a far greater number of choices and an opportunity for self-direction. Their life knowledge should be used whenever possible for conversation, writing and reading.

With children we diagnose what they should learn, adult learning should engage the adult in the diagnosis of his/her own learning needs.

Experience has shown that those programs that involve their adults in planning what they will learn and how they will learn it are much richer and more vital than those that do not.

For adults, better learning takes place when you involve the learners in teaching each other or some process in which they are involved in carrying out their own learning.

In adult learning, the idea is to engage them in a process of reassessing the remaining gaps between the competencies they want to have (or must have) and the competencies they do have.

To an adult, his/her self-identity is derived from what he/she has done. Therefore, in adult learning, the individual's life experience must not be devalued. Experiential techniques (contextualized learning) such as simulations, case studies, problem solving and other participative methods are important since they draw heavily upon the person's experiences.

With children, learning experiences are expected to be applied at some later time in preparation for adult living. Adults' time perspective motive in learning something is to be able to better deal with some problem about which he/she feels inadequate now.

Adult learning is problem-oriented; the Learner must feel a need to learn.

Adult students have "outside pressures" that may include survival needs, personal needs, responsibilities for others and their time. They are aware of their needs and personal goals may take priority over general improvement.

Adults who do not speak or read well reflect these skills on their self-image. They need reassurance that this does not reflect on who they are and what they are capable of doing; there is a reason why their reading is low and when we discover what it is and how to compensate for it, their reading will improve.

Adults are already motivated to learn- that's why they are here! It is our job to make sure they stay motivated by providing them with meaningful experiences, quality learning and small successes that can be celebrated often along the way.

4) Points to Ponder During the Lesson

Be well organized-but, flexible. Remember, your job is not so much to teach as it is to help them learn. .. Don't get in the way of their learning.

Resist the urge to ask, "Does anyone have any questions?" It is a sure way not to get any ... ask open-ended questions to encourage comment.

Make it as fun as possible. We may be focused on a serious problem, but the learning task can be involving, motivating, active, and there are humorous sides to every problem.

Give people ample opportunity to share their experiences regarding the subject, and make an effort to keep things positive and focused on the objectives.

Try to be responsive to where the person wants to go and what they want to pursue as much as time allows, provided it is focused on the objectives.

Review the points to remember at the beginning and end of each lesson, giving focus to the purpose of your meeting and reinforcing what the Learner has gained.

Discuss the process of the learning experience to get feedback for yourself for future efforts. Adults should be asked continuously for their opinions and points of view as you develop and evaluate your learning sessions.

5) The Adult and Learning Changes

Interests

Changes of interest are an accurate reflection of such things as changes in abilities and energy, outlets for the sex drive, modifications of the personality, and shifts in vocational and cultural expectations. The older person is likely to be much more resistant to acquiring interests that interfere with established habits or customs.

Values

As we grow older, it is doubtful that we change our values as much as we accept new values.

Motivation

Motivation is usually employed as the general term to designate the kinds of relationships that an organism has with its environment (Desire to solve a problem).

Time

Time is limited for an adult; this fact in itself acts to focus and intensify the motive.

(When a person has ample time for choosing a different activity, this may be a period of bewilderment and frustration due to a diffusion of aims and appropriate motives).

Money

The possession or desire for money and the complex attitudes built around its possession and use are a major modifier of motivations.

Age

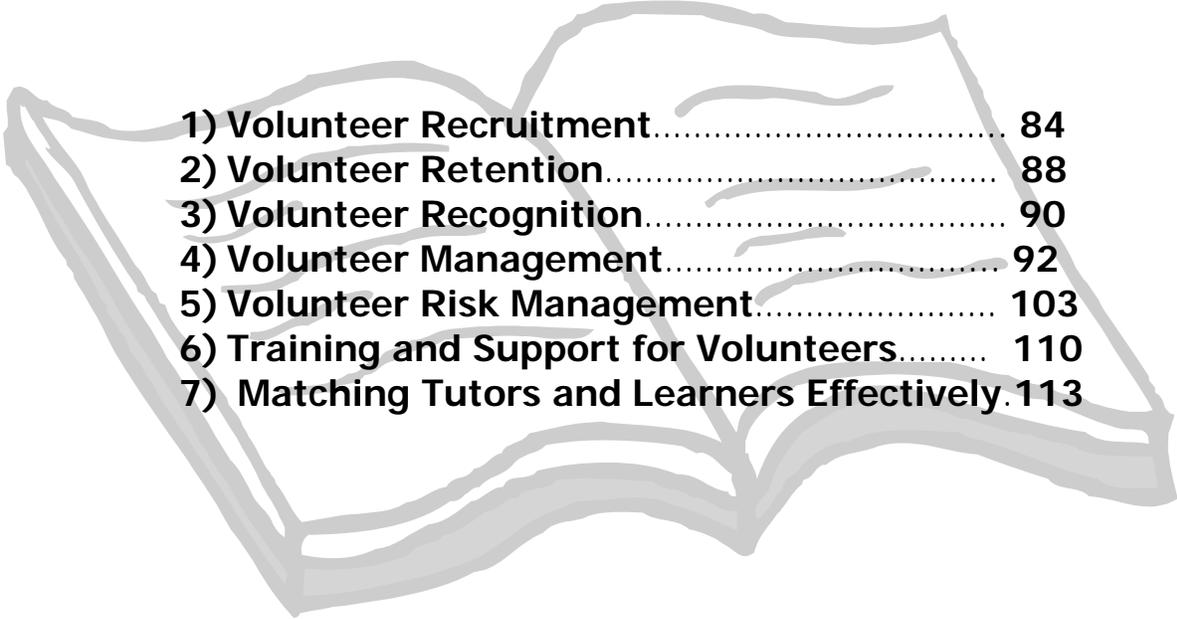
Age may or may not be a major modifier depending on the sex of the individual and the system of values adopted by that person.

Resources:

Verizon Thinkfinity: www.thinkfinity.org

www.ncsall.net/

Volunteers



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Volunteers

1) Volunteer Recruitment

Promoting your literacy program and recruiting volunteers go hand in hand.

There are three basic ways of recruiting:

- 1) **On the Road** requires distributing brochures, speaking to large groups, putting up posters and passing the information on by word of mouth.
- 2) **Target Recruitment** involves identifying a specific group and approaching that group with a thought-out plan. The target approach is appropriate when you are seeking volunteers with very specific skills. In the case of literacy, you may want to deliver your address to a retired teacher's group. Consider the best way to deliver your message based on what would motivate them to become involved.
- 3) **Network**, approach people who are already connected to your organization and who value its mission. Board members, current volunteers, and other stakeholders are good connections for bringing in more volunteers.

Volunteers are motivated for a variety of reasons. They want to:

- give back to the community
- make a difference in someone's life
- stay active
- be productive while in-between jobs
- share a skill or experience
- gain new skills, academic credit
- feel needed, good, proud, be part of a team
- make friends, meet someone new
- donate their free time

They may also feel that volunteering is part of their moral obligation and a way to live out their faith. Taking these reasons into account, you can target your publicity in a way that points out that these are important reasons to get involved. Some places and ways of getting your message out may include:

- volunteer fairs
- public speaking engagements
- posters
- brochures
- TV/media
- newspapers
- volunteer center
- churches

- libraries
- friends and colleagues
- Submit stories and or articles for publication in corporate, government and human service agency newsletters.

Today, more adults are searching for ways to be involved through the internet. Take advantage of these free volunteer recruiting vehicles. Here are some of the most widely-used volunteer matching sites:

- <http://volunteer.united-e-way.org/uwsem/agency/>
- <http://www.1-800-volunteer.org/1800Vol/volunteerswmi/>
- <http://www.idealists.org/>
- <http://www1.networkforgood.org>
- <http://volunteer.united-e-way.org/> (**Volunteer Solutions**)
- <http://www.voa.org/> (**Volunteers of America**)
- <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>
- <http://www.pointsoflight.org/>

Be sure to check out sites that serve your particular locale as well.

The National Center for Family Literacy has developed a guidebook called “Planning for Volunteers in Literacy.” They list the following tips for recruiting volunteers:

- Know who is in charge of recruiting volunteers in your organization and make it a fully defined part of that person’s job description.
- Make repeated contact with community organizations that support the mission of your program.
- Have job descriptions for positions that can be filled by volunteers.
- Help potential volunteers see the big picture of your program.
- Make volunteer recruitment a year-round part of your program.
- Don’t assume that community agencies and volunteers know about your program.
- Don’t assume that teachers know how to use volunteers without some training.

Sometimes People just need to be asked.

The bottom line for getting people to volunteer is to ask them. Many people are willing to help but are waiting to be asked. Getting out and asking as many people as possible and asking your current volunteers to ask others is a great tool for recruitment.

NCFL: "Planning for Volunteer Literacy"
The following are two sample tutor job descriptions.

Volunteer Tutor Job Description
Volunteer Tutor

Reports to: Adult Literacy Director

Function: To tutor adult learners in basic skills

Specific Duties:

1. Maintain confidentiality regarding assigned student
2. Actively prepare for each session
3. Maintain records of tutoring session
4. Adhere to requirements as outlined in Tutor Contract.
5. Maintain regular communication with Program Director
6. Adhere to the goals and procedures of XXX

Qualifications:

1. Must have a sincere desire to help other adults develop their English communication skills.
2. Must complete required tutor training
3. Must be able to pass a security check
4. Must make a commitment to attend in-services and training
5. Must be willing to tutor a student for a minimum of 12 months.

Rights of a Tutor:

1. To be viewed as a valuable resource to this agency, its staff, and its clients
2. To be given meaningful assignments, with full involvement and participation
3. To be treated as an equal with coworkers
4. To have effective supervision
5. To receive recognition for work done

Job Description for Literacy /ESL Tutors
(Working with Adults)

Responsibilities

As a volunteer tutor with the XXX Literacy Council you will be expected to:

- Learn to correctly use Laubach or other basic texts and materials by satisfactorily completing the required tutoring training workshop.
- Tutor a learner at least 1 year.
- If possible meet with your learner twice a week for a total of 2-3 hours minimum per week.
- Whenever possible, give your learner at least 24 hours notice if you are unable to meet.
- Carry out a lesson plan and keep records of your learner's progress.
- Return learner progress reports to the Council when tutoring is terminated.
- Administer a checkup test to the learner at the completion of each textbook level.
- Return completed test and results to the Council.
- Award a diploma to the learner when he/she has successfully completed each level.
- Forward diploma stub and score sheet to the Council for learner profile records.
- Keep monthly record of tutoring hours, preparation time, learner curriculum and lesson progress on the form provided by the Council. Mail or bring it to the Council office the first week of each month.
- Contact the Program Coordinator/Council office if you have questions about your materials or teaching techniques.
- Attend in-service meetings, whenever possible, and maintain close contact with the office concerning your tutoring arrangement.
- Encourage the learner to continue in Adult Basic Education classes or continue education at a local technical college when the learner has enough training to do so.

-Notify the Council office when tutoring begins, is interrupted for a period of time, or is terminated.

2) Volunteer Retention

The most important concept in retaining volunteers is to appreciate them. Volunteers appreciate being part of a group. A key step in retention is to understand what is important to people in their volunteering experience. A welcoming, warm environment and solicited feedback from the volunteer gives a sense of belonging. They appreciate rewards, structure, responsibility, support and community identity.

Get the volunteer involved right away, even if a learner is not immediately available. The volunteer's enthusiasm may diminish if involvement is delayed.

Including your volunteers in program planning is one way of showing them respect and letting them know they are valued. It can also help you with new ideas and perspectives in planning.

Strategies for Retaining Volunteers

- Maintain good support of your volunteers
 - 50/50 management principal – maintaining a balance between bringing volunteers into the program and supporting these volunteers once they are tutoring (Source: Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center)
 - Regular contact, not just when things are not going well.
 - Create a bond between the organization and the volunteer, not just the volunteer and the learner.
- Regular non-threatening evaluation of progress
 - Ask if your volunteers are satisfied and happy
- Clear expectations
 - Good tutor job description
- Good training and follow-up in-services
- Opportunities to help
- Opportunities to take a "time out" if needed
- A suggestion box
- Exit Interviews
 - Find out why people leave your organization.

Finding out why volunteers are leaving can help with a retention plan for your organization. According to *Verizon Thinkfinity*, these are some common reasons why people stop volunteering in literacy organizations:

- The time commitment was more than they expected.
- They didn't feel supported by the agency.
- The volunteer experience was different from what they anticipated.
- They only volunteered for a specific event or period of time.
- They felt inadequate or ineffective as volunteers –or that they weren't making a difference.

People are willing to volunteer for different roles.

There are many ways to tap into your volunteer's gifts. Upon registration, ask if there are other ways they would be willing to help. Adults have a life-time of experience and the skills they have developed can be a benefit to your program. In literacy, we often are so focused on finding volunteers to be tutors that we forget that we can use volunteers in other capacities. Here are just a few ideas for ways that you can use your volunteers:

- Board members
- Clerical assistance
 - Newsletter
 - Surveys
 - Sending out thank-you notices
 - Special projects
- Technological assistance
 - Website design and maintenance
- Fundraising
- Training
- Grant writing
- HR assistance
- Gardening/landscape
- In-kind donations

The key to retaining your volunteers is to let them know that you value them, appreciate them and that they are making a difference in the lives of others. Keying into volunteer motivation is keying into volunteer commitment.

Resources:

www.thinkfinity.org

www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/content/vol-management/hints.php

www.energizeinc.com

www.aelweb.vcu.edu/literacy_support_center/links/running.shtml

3) Volunteer Recognition

Recognition can be as easy as saying thank-you. Everyone likes to know that their efforts are appreciated that they have done a good job. The extent to which this is done can be dependant upon your staff and your resources. Use a volunteer to help out with the recognition. Here are a few ideas that organizations have used to recognize and show appreciation for their volunteers:

- Announce accomplishments
 - Types of accomplishment
 - Hours of service
 - Years of service
 - Learner achievement
 - Project accomplishment
 - Types of announcements
 - News releases
 - Newsletters
 - Volunteer of the month

- Thanking volunteers
 - Notes and cards of appreciation
 - Birthdays
 - Get well
 - Thank you
 - Anniversary with the organization
 - Saying thank you whenever possible
 - "Wall of Fame"
 - "Volunteer of the Month"
 - Chocolate or other goodies
 - Five year pins, ten year pins etc.

- Send a note to their boss if they work (with the volunteer's permission)
 - This acknowledges their efforts
 - The note often becomes part of their personnel file

- Special "Thank You" event

A few other helpful ideas include:

- Keep track of unique ways your volunteer has helped the organization. When your volunteer does something that has really helped the organization, remember to write down the impact. Then, instead of using the same language for each one, you will be able to write a card or speech that has a different message for each volunteer.
- Be aware of volunteers' interest through conversations and observation. That way, when it comes time to give them recognition gifts you can get them something that they will really appreciate, and they will also know that you are interested in them.
- Ask other volunteers, clients, or staff about the volunteer's efforts and personality. This will help you to get an idea of how others see this person, and will make the volunteer feel more included in the group, knowing how others perceive them.
- Find out what types of foods your volunteers like – then randomly present them with treats, just to let them know that they are appreciated. Sometimes group volunteer recognition events lose the individual element of each volunteer's contribution. Small, periodic gifts can help to eliminate this problem.
- Celebrate volunteer birthdays and announce their birthdays to all staff. For many people, just knowing that everyone in an organization is aware of you and shows interest can help you to realize that the organization appreciates your contribution.

It is important that you apply the same principles of recruitment, retention and recognition to volunteers who are not tutors as it is to those who are tutors. While tutors sometimes face the challenges of working with learners where the match is not ideal or when learners do not seem to progress, volunteers who do not work directly with your learners often feel even more disconnected from your mission. Be sure that you acknowledge all of your volunteers and their importance to your organization's accomplishment of its goals and vision.

Resource:

www.volunteer.ca

4) Volunteer Management

Recordkeeping

While it can be one of the more tedious parts of maintaining an organization, recordkeeping is also one of the most vital. From the minutes at a meeting to a log of what has transpired with a particular tutor/learner pair, the writings that track what occurred provide an organization with the proof it needs to demonstrate that something happened in a particular way.

Record keeping is also helpful for knowing the organization's history. Turnover in the Board of Directors and staff is inevitable, and you don't want your organization's history to disappear with the departure of a senior staff or board member. For example, if there is a new person on staff who is responsible for a volunteer recognition event, he or she can look over the past records of what happened with the event to see what has worked well and what has been a failure, including the reasons behind the success/failure. Without those records, this staff member will have to start from scratch, possibly making many of the same mistakes that his or her predecessor did.

Additionally, history is needed on a day-to-day basis when working with tutor/learner pairs. Say a tutor e-mails you with a concern about how to teach a learner a particular concept. You dispense the advice and the tutor goes forth to try it out. Two months pass and the tutor e-mails you again, saying, "Well, I tried what you suggested, but it didn't work so well with my learner. What else can I try?" Are you necessarily going to remember what you told the tutor two months ago? You might, if you only have a small program. But what if you have 100 active tutors? How about 300? Having a record of the correspondence you had with your volunteer will enable you to provide the best help in the most efficient manner.

As well, recordkeeping will allow you to show your stakeholders and the greater community the impact that your organization has on individuals and families who reside there. Celebrating your successes and advocating for support will be much easier when you have the records to back up your efforts.

Perhaps most critically, recordkeeping is an important part of risk management. The records provide the necessary verification that you did interview and check the backgrounds of your volunteers before placing them with learners, that you did provide adequate training to your volunteers (not only in terms of what they will be doing, but specifying the boundaries and what will not be permissible) and that you did address any issues that came up that could put the tutor or learner at risk.

Recordkeeping is one of the most vital parts of an organization.

You should keep track of:

- ***Meetings*** – If you have a Volunteer Services Committee, keep good minutes of the meetings.
- ***Special events*** – Record key partners in the event, the number of volunteers needed and in which capacities, donations received, documentation of the planning phase, the event itself, and post-event reflections.
- ***Tutor/learner pairs*** – Keep intake forms, references/background checks of tutors, learner evaluations, tutor interviews, signed tutor or learner agreements, a log of the pair dynamics, questions that are pretty common among your tutor base, documentation of a “problem” tutor or learner, success stories and hours that a pair have worked together.
- ***Donors*** – Keep track of who your high-level donors are, how involved they are with the organization (do they also volunteer?), specific information about them, giving patterns (specific time of year, whether they are more likely to give to a specific initiative instead of general giving or vice versa), and the type of donation they prefer to make (through United Way, a gift of stock, etc.).
- ***Promotional contacts*** – Have the general list (media, churches, etc.) and always send news releases/announcements to the various outlets, have specific information about those who have responded (who the contact person is, what about the story you pitched previously was attractive to your contact, the results after the story was printed/aired) in order to be more efficient in your efforts in recruiting tutors.

It may be tempting to try to cut corners, but your program, and ultimately your learners, will suffer in the long run. Some of the record keeping can be delegated to a volunteer (committee meeting minutes, for example), but for those items that cannot be delegated, just set aside some time in your day or week to work on whatever documentation you need to do. Working on it incrementally will not seem as daunting as working on it at the month’s end. Plus, the information will be fresh in your mind, so you will be less likely to forget key facts.

Taking the time necessary will pay off in the long run.

Data Management

With the demand for more detailed outcome information, using some sort of electronic system would be in your best interest so that you can quickly search and categorize your data for whatever specific purpose you intend. The size and needs of your organization will determine which system would work best for you. Here are a few options for meeting your data management needs:

- LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System) is an updated, online version of the data management system created by Pro Literacy specifically for literacy programs. According to their website, "LACES tracks students, classes, staff, community contacts, donors and instructional materials associated with Adult Basic Education, Literacy, GED and ESL programs." For programs that have larger numbers of learners or a more intricate offering of services, LACES could be the answer. However, with it having online access only, high-speed Internet access is needed.
- FileMaker is a generic data management system that could be customized somewhat to meet the needs of your organization. Because it has not been designed specifically for a literacy program, there may be some limitations in terms of how many services it can track. For small to medium programs, however, it may work out well.
- Excel spreadsheets can be very useful for small programs. This software program is readily available and is easy to customize. The downside is that it can become big and unwieldy if you are trying to track too many different programs or if you have a lot of data that you want to gather and sort through.
- Access databases have more functionality in terms of being able to customize them to fit the needs of your programs. Unfortunately, it can be a difficult application to program, so it would be important to have someone who really knows what they are doing to be available to create the system and update it as necessary.

An electronic data system can save time and be more efficient.

Evaluation

Volunteers want feedback. Tutors are not “just volunteers” - they are the unpaid staff that you have recruited as an integral part of the services you offer to the community. They are your representatives who oftentimes provide the first impression of your organization to friends, family and the general public. It is in the best interest of your learners and your agency to ensure that all tutors continue performing at the expected level and that they are properly representing your literacy organization.

Another reason for evaluating tutors is to maintain that connection with your organization. The design of many tutoring programs puts tutors and learners out in the community, where the learners and their needs can supersede the association with the agency. Even with e-mail and home contact, it can be very difficult to keep the organizational bond strong. By requiring tutors to come in to the office for a periodic evaluation, you can sustain, and hopefully strengthen, the relationships with them.

A third reason for tutor evaluations is to make sure that you are maximizing the potential of your volunteers. Say, for example, one of your tutors is friends with the head of HR at a company that you have been trying to connect with to discuss a workplace literacy program. You might not ever find out that information if you don't have that tutor come in from time to time. Or, what if a tutor, who is a talented Web designer, suddenly has some free time? This tutor might not think of offering his or her talents to your organization if the bond with you is not very strong.

The Evaluation

A volunteer evaluation is very similar to evaluations received from employers (except for the discussion of salary raises) – abilities to perform in accordance with the job description, the development of skills, taking the initiative in terms of “professional development” opportunities, interaction with staff, etc. You want to make sure that the evaluation is designed to be a two-way conversation, not simply you telling the individual what he or she did well or not so well.

Evaluations for new tutors should happen at the three-month and six-month mark, and once a year for continuing tutors.

Make it known at intake, to both student and tutor that each individual has the right to ask the Literacy Director to be removed from an unsuccessful match. If such an event occurs, that would be a perfect time to ask the tutor if he/she is comfortable as a tutor or would like to discontinue his/her tutoring responsibilities with your organization. This

method of advanced communication is often a tactful way to remove ineffective tutors without hard feelings. Many tutors decide that they would like to help out in some other part of the organization instead of tutoring.

You have an obligation to your learners to your agency. Make sure that the tutors meet your organization's quality standards. Ask any volunteer who demonstrates poor performance or who is in violation of policies set forth by your literacy organization to leave the program.

Not that it's an easy thing to do. Most of the concern surrounding the firing of a volunteer is the fear that the person who was fired will go forth and smear the name of your agency in the community. While that is a valid concern, consider the alternatives. If you keep on a volunteer who is doing a poor job of tutoring or who is engaging in behavior that is in violation of policies, you could open your organization to liability, you are not staying true to your mission of serving learners and serving the community. That could have implications that could affect your reputation for quality programming, could affect funding and (worst case scenario) could affect your ability to keep your doors open.

Resources:

"A Few Pointers on the Unpleasant Topic of Firing Volunteers" by Sarah Jane Rehnborg, PhD: www.serviceleader.org/new/managers/2005/07/000270.php

"Firing High Maintenance Volunteers" by Thomas McKee:
www.volunteerpower.com/articles/firing.htm

"How to Fire a Volunteer and Live to Tell About It" by Steve McCurley:
www.casnet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/fore.htm

Performance Appraisals (Evaluations):
www.casnet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/perform.htm

Sample Volunteer Evaluation Form:
www.casnet.org/program-managment/volunteer-manage/casaeval.htm

"Supervising the 'Invisible' Volunteer" by Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch:
www.casnet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/invisible.htm

"Volunteer Evaluation" by Steve McCurley:
www.casnet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/voleval.htm

Volunteer Management Forms

Before the Match

To start the files of prospective tutors, you should have them fill out some forms that will ensure that you have complete records. Before tutoring has started, these are the completed forms you will need to have in each volunteer's file:

- Volunteer application
"The Volunteer Application Form" by Susan J. Ellis and Katherine Noyes Campbell is a good guide for what to include in your volunteer application, Article URL: www.energizeinc.com/art/apro.html.
 - [literacy.nypl.org/application forms/Tutor.cfm.html](http://literacy.nypl.org/application%20forms/Tutor.cfm.html)
 - ci.quincy.ma.us/tcpl/lvaquincy/files/application.html
 - www.familit.ca/help/volunteerform.html

- Tutor/Agency agreement
The tutor/agency agreement is important for three reasons: 1) it lets the tutors know that, even though they are volunteers, there are still expectations in terms of their performance, 2) it denotes the seriousness of the commitment they are embarking upon and 3) it establishes that the organization has obligations to the tutors, thereby making the agency and the tutors *partners* in this endeavor.
 - www.casenet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/sample-agency.htm
 - www.emergencysHELTERfoxvalley.org/Agency_Volunteer_Agreement.pdf

- Confidentiality agreement
Because of the importance of confidentiality, it is worth it to have a separate confidentiality agreement that is not just lumped together with the tutor/agency agreement. The following link talks a bit more about that and gives some good examples of language to use in a confidentiality agreement:
www.vcn.bc.ca/volbc/riskmanagment/pdf/confidentialitytemplate.pdf
Samples:
 - nationalservicerresources.org/finemanager/download/3/la2.pdf
 - www.caastlc.org/vol_cagree.pdf
 - www.uptownshelter.org/confidentiality.asp

- Permission form to conduct a criminal background check
In order to conduct criminal background checks, you must get permission from the tutor first. This permission can be obtained on the volunteer application or on a separate form.

- www.greatlakeseducation.org/files/inlandseas/91.pdf
- www.abvi-goodwill.org/volunteer/Volunterr%20application.pdf
- Preferences form
 - Time/day of volunteering
 - Location – either general geography or a particular public place, but NOT in the home of a tutor or learner
 - Smoker/non-smoker – even with the tutoring happening in a public place, it can be an issue with people who are very sensitive to smoke
 - Pets – again, it can be problematic for people with severe allergies to work with a pet owner
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Nationality

Also, have an option for responses to the open-ended question, “Is there anything else we should consider when making this match?” Perhaps the tutor has an aptitude with a different language or experience with a different culture. Or, maybe the tutor has a medical condition that will require some accommodation. A lot of useful information can be learned by including this question.

Finding out your tutors’ preferences is learner-centered.

During the Match

Once tutors have been matched with learners, the most critical form that you will need is the monthly progress report. It can also be called “monthly feedback” because tutors occasionally will have an aversion to doing reports.

Monthly reporting should give you the following information:

- Names of tutor and learner
- Month for which the feedback is for
- Type of tutoring
- Hours a tutor and learner have worked together that month
- Any changes that may have occurred in name, address, telephone number or e-mail address of the tutor or learner
- Activities (both personal and NRS)
- Anecdotes
- Problem areas
- Suggestions for continuous education for tutors

Samples:

- www.litnetwork.org/mff.html
- cf.unc.edu/octc/forms
- www.pocolit.org/Monthly-TutorLearner-Report-Form.html

Flexibility is the key to maximize the amount of monthly reporting that is submitted. Forms that have a combination of check boxes and text boxes for entering specific information are great for giving guidance to tutors regarding the specific goals that organizations are looking for and offering the opportunity to write more about what is happening. If at all possible, have the form available online so that it is readily accessible by everyone who is on the internet. E-mailing tutors on a monthly basis and attaching the Word document of the form is also very helpful. For those not on the computer, have paper forms of the reports easily available in places like libraries and bookstores, or have a check box on them so that a tutor can indicate when he or she needs more of them mailed out. Or, if some tutors hate using forms, it is helpful if they can e-mail the person who is coordinating volunteers a narrative of their monthly report, making sure to include the names for the tutor and learner, hours tutored for the month and whatever other pertinent information is needed. There have even been some organizations that have allowed tutors to phone in monthly feedback if needed.

Flexibility is the key for successful information gathering.

Some literacy providers request that reports are turned in quarterly, but there could be a lot of information that is lost if a tutor submits feedback only once every three months. Additionally, it is easier to troubleshoot with a tutor on an issue that has been going on for a couple of weeks vs. troubleshooting problems that are a couple of months old.

A monthly reporting system is a better option. Also, it is good to have a specific date by which it needs to be turned in, say the 5th or the 7th of the following month, otherwise tutors may spend all of the next month just getting in monthly feedback (which can wreak havoc on any reporting you need to complete.)

Deadline dates for turning in forms adds to efficiency.

Monthly reports should go in the learner's file so that when the match is ended, the progress that the learner made is kept with that file, thus making it easier to transition to a new tutor.

One other form that is necessary once a match is underway is a communication/activity log. This could be as simple as making a three-column table in a Word document, with the first column narrow for the date, the middle column wider for recording the communication or activity that took place and a third narrow column for the initials of

the person completing the form. This is a form that should be in the files of both tutors and learners so that when the match ends, the history of what happened is retained in both of them.

After the Match

Some system of exit paperwork is always a good thing when a tutor leaves a match. You can either have a form that answers specific questions (when did the match end, why did it end, what materials/skills were being worked on, what are the learner's strengths and weaknesses, what kind of approach was being used, etc.) or just leave it open-ended to be more of an "exit summary" that can go in the learner's file. This is very helpful information for any subsequent tutors.

Resources:

You can find sample Volunteer-Agency Agreements at:

www.abuseintervention.org/volunteeringHome.html

Additional management resources are located on the following pages.

Volunteer Management Resources

Online

The internet has a tremendous amount of information on volunteer management, the majority of which is free or very low cost. Here are some places to go for information:

Charity Channel (www.charitychannel.com)

This site covers volunteer management and a variety of other nonprofit-related topics, charges a nominal fee of \$2-3 per month and also has online seminars that you can take for an additional fee.

Charity Village (www.charityvillage.com)

This site is set up for Canada's nonprofit community, but the resources there have information that is very applicable to US nonprofits; includes a variety of items related to current events, resources, quick guides and online seminars that you can take for an additional fee.

CyberVPM (groups.yahoo.com/group/http://cybervpm)

Cyber VPM is an online discussion list on Yahoo! Groups of volunteer managers from various nonprofit organizations.

Energize, Inc. (www.energizeinc.com)

Susan Ellis, an internationally known author, speaker and consultant on volunteer management.

E-Volunteerism (www.e-volunteerism.com)

This is a fee-based electronic journal written by leading experts in the field of volunteer management: comes out quarterly; \$40/year; interactive component for discussing articles; access to all past articles.

Free Management Library, "Developing and Managing Volunteer Programs"
(www.managementhelp.org/staffing/outsrcng/volnteer/volnteer.htm)

This site is written by Carter McNamara, an internationally known expert in nonprofit capacity building; also links to many articles on Internet; very comprehensive look at volunteer management.

Merrill Associates (www.merrillassociates.net)

This site was created by the late Mary Merrill that contains information on many hot topics regarding volunteer management.

OzVPM (www.ozvpm.com)

This site is written specifically for Australian and New Zealand nonprofits, but the “Resource Bank” and “Hot Topics” sections of this site are appropriate for US nonprofits.

Points of Light Foundation (www.pointsoflight.org)

Go to their “Resources” section (link on top of the page) for great articles on many aspects of volunteer management; however, some articles are restricted to members only.

ServiceLeader.org (www.serviceleader.org)

A project of the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs of the University of Texas at Austin.

TechSoup (www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/volunteers/index.cfm)

A listing of articles on volunteer management.

Volunteer Management section of CASAnet

(www.casanet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage)

A compilation of articles on volunteer management that are applicable to all nonprofit organizations.

Volunteer Today (www.volunteertoday.com)

Free online e-newsletter with searchable database of past articles on volunteer management.

Books

There are many books out there on the various aspects of volunteer management. Some of the leading experts in the field include: Susan Ellis, Nan Hawthorne, Steve McCurley, Rick Lynch, Linda Graff, Betty Stallings, Nancy Macduff, and Sue Vineyard. Searching Amazon.com or another online bookseller will bring up many wonderful resources.

In-Person Resources

Volunteer centers are very useful sources for nonprofit organizations. They typically act as a clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities, so it is possible for you to list your volunteer positions with them. As well, many have resource libraries where you can check out materials on volunteer management.

Another resource would be your local DOVIA – “directors of volunteers in agencies.” DOVIA is designed to promote professionalism in volunteer management, as well as provide networking and professional development opportunities for people who manage volunteers. Your local volunteer center will have more information on the DOVIA in your area and any other volunteer manager-related gatherings and professional development opportunities that are available.

5) Volunteer Risk Management

“The goal of risk management is to improve performance by acknowledging and controlling risks... It is not just about buying insurance. It is not just about avoiding lawsuits. It is about protecting and conserving your organization’s resources and providing goods and services sensibly. Risk management frees your organization to pursue its mission.” (Tremper & Kostin, 1993, p.1)

Risk management involves looking at your organization and seeing what items need to be in place to provide a safe, dynamic and supportive environment for volunteers, staff and learners. It is about providing good day-to-day operating policies, procedures and training. A simple and straightforward approach can be taken that allows programs to worry less and spend more time serving learners.

The Charity Channel’s Volunteer Management Review lists the following as good volunteer risk management practices:

- Develop written position descriptions for volunteers.
- Implement a structured procedure for screening and selecting volunteers.
- Develop orientation procedures and materials to clarify expectations and establish standards of behavior.
- Provide training for the job and include ongoing training opportunities to stay on top of new techniques, trends, equipment, procedures and job changes.
- Ensure ongoing, consistent supervision that monitors performance and maintains an open and timely line of communication.
- Evaluate performance honestly and create plans for improving weak or inappropriate performance, and for rewarding positive behavior. Implement action (termination) when warranted.

Treating your volunteers with respect, as if they were members of your staff, minimizes many risks. Having policies in place that address expectations, harassment, screening and evaluation shows the volunteer that you value them and their time. Be sure that your volunteers are aware of these policies by conducting an orientation that includes a review of the policies and copies for them to have as a resource. It is also important for them to know who they should come to if they have any issues that need to be addressed.

Treat your volunteers like members of your staff.

Resources:

www.themlc.org

charitychannel.com

Samples of Volunteer Policies

There are a variety of sources that offer sample policies. A sample volunteer agreement is located on the following page. A second sample agreement can be viewed at www.doa.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=753. Some other sources for sample policies are:

- Volunteer Conduct Agreement:
www.themlc.org/sites/9290fbae-86dc-4ed1-9fc8-7bfabe4766ba/uploads/7d_Volunteer_Conduct_Agreement.pdf
- Community Service Volunteers:
www.themlc.org/sites/9290fbae-86dc-4ed1-9fc8-7bfabe4766ba/uploads/7d_Community_Service.pdf
- Various policy templates from a Canadian source that can be modified:
www.nald.ca/library/learning/template/page4.htm
- Verizon Thinkfinity free course: "Volunteers are Vital: Successfully Incorporating Volunteers Into Your Program's Future" www.thinkfinity.org
- Guidelines for volunteers working in a correctional setting:
www.nald.ca/fulltext/volguide/Volguide.pdf
- A handbook for volunteers: www.themlc.org/vmhandbook.html

Two samples of Volunteer Tutor and Student Guidelines are located on the following pages.

Sample of a volunteer service agreement:

**XXX Literacy Council
TUTOR GUIDELINE CONTRACT
Volunteer Agreement of Service**

Every Tutor is expected to:

- sign a Tutor Guideline Contract to become eligible for training.
- complete a 12-hour tutor training class.
- accept a State Police background check.
- volunteer for at least one year.
- have a willingness to teach Adult Basic Education (ABE) students and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) students.
- work one-on-one and/or in small group sessions.
- maintain student's privacy and confidentiality.
- respect and work with people of diverse backgrounds, avoiding discrimination based on race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, economic status or disability.
- use an appropriate tutoring site. Tutors may not meet in private homes.
- notify the student in advance of anticipated tardiness or absence. Instruct the student to do the same.
- submit monthly time sheets of hours, progress, and materials used.

TUTOR GUIDELINE CONTRACT

I have read and acknowledge the provisions as written in the XXX Literacy Council Volunteer Agreement of Service.

Signed

Date

Sample of a student agreement:

**XXX Literacy Council
STUDENT GUIDELINE CONTRACT**

Students are expected to:

- sign into the MARC program.
- take a pre-test to establish current grade level.
- take a post-test after approximately 40 hours of instruction.
- notify tutor in advance if anticipating tardiness or absence.

Students are expected to:

- sign into the XXX program.
- take a pre-test to establish current grade level.
- take a post-test after approximately 40 hours of instruction.
- notify tutor in advance if anticipating tardiness or absence.
- do homework as requested to assist in reaching the student's goals.
- notify tutor and the director when withdrawing from the program.

Students are entitled to:

- be treated with respect and dignity.
- be allowed to make decisions regarding goals and materials.
- have a private and safe setting as well as confidentiality.
- ✂ □ ℳ ℳ ◆◆◆ □ □ ✕ ■ ♫ ☞ ■ ♪ ✂ □ ℳ ℳ ○ ☞ ◆ ℳ □ ✕ ☞ ● ◆ ☞
- adequate supervision for young students.

STUDENT GUIDELINE CONTRACT

I have read and acknowledge the provisions as written in the XXX Literacy Council Volunteer Agreement of Service.

Signed

Date

Screening Volunteers

Screening volunteers is a necessity in today's nonprofit world. The three main reasons for screening are:

1. Prevention of harm
 - a. Screen enough to identify applicants who might take advantage of trust.
 - b. Screen to make sure potential volunteers qualify for their position.
 - c. Screen to account for the demands and risks of each position.
 - d. Screen to protect both the learner and the volunteer.
2. Quality Programming
 - a. Screen to get the right people into the right positions.
3. Liability Reduction
 - a. Screen with the following in mind:
 - i. What is our position/exposure?
 - ii. Can we mount a reasonable defense?
 - iii .Have we created proof of what we've done?

Screen to get the right people in the right jobs.

The most difficult concept for nonprofits to accept is the idea that not everyone can be trusted. You must consider that while the likelihood of a volunteer doing any intentional harm is very small and of the greatest concern, unintentional harm is also a possibility. Adequate screening can avoid the consequences of a volunteer not having the skills, knowledge or other attributes needed to do a good job. Realistically, substandard performance and volunteers in the wrong positions are the most frequent consequences of inadequate screening.

We place our volunteers in positions of trust by often placing them with unsupervised access to people who are looking to us for help. We may give them access to private, confidential and often business information. Some volunteers also have access to money and other organizational assets. We cannot assure that our trust is well placed without some mechanism for screening.

To avoid intentional harm, a police check is a useful tool. This can be done for crimes in the state of Michigan by accessing the following website: www.mi.gov/ichat it is the Michigan State Police web site.

In the state of Michigan [http:// www.michiganstatepolice.gov](http://www.michiganstatepolice.gov) it is the website for registered sex offenders. Just type in the search box Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR).

While police checks can identify those who have a criminal history, they are not that effective at identifying people who might be ill-intended, and they are useless at assessing whether a volunteer has the skills, knowledge and other attributes needed to do a good job. They are also not very accurate. However, they do show that the organization is attempting due diligence toward screening.

Some of the following screening tools can help provide the information needed to do an adequate screening:

- Written job description
- Written or online application form
- Interviews
- Reference checks
- Qualification verification
- Proof of identity

An organization must also assess how much screening is advisable before the screening goes overboard and becomes a barrier to getting volunteers. To assess the depth of screening that your organization can and should do, it is important to ask the question: "What is at stake if something should happen?"

Resources:

"Resources and Further Reading" are located on the next page.

Sample volunteer job descriptions are located in Part 1 of this section – Volunteer Recruitment.

"Everyone Ready" from Energize: www.energizeinc.com

"Volunteer Screening: Reasonable Measure, Reasonably Applied" by Linda Graff

Resources and Further Reading

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Wendover, Robert W. 1996. *Hand-Picked: The Complete Guide to Finding and Hiring the Best Employees*. Shawnee Mission, KS: National Press Publications.

6) Training and Support for Volunteers

All tutors **must** have some form of tutor training. The components can be adjusted to cover those items that are important to individual programs. It is crucial that tutors are introduced to adult learning theory and understand the differences between working with children and working with adults. Retired teachers frequently volunteer to be tutors and often feel they do not need extra training. It is important that they understand the mission of your organization and the special challenges that adult learners face on a daily basis. Even experienced, professional educators benefit from a quality tutor training.

Ongoing Professional Development

It is very helpful to tutors to have in-services that give additional information about educational strategies or general information about the types of learners they are working with. Some organizations present a very general tutor training and then use follow-up in-services to train their tutors about the specifics of working with ELL (English Language Learners or learning disabilities or the specific setting the tutor may be working in, such as corrections or family literacy.

Some examples of in-service topics that tend to be of interest to tutors are:

- **Tutor reunions** – Tutors can share strategies that work for them and ask questions of others. It is a good opportunity for those working in more isolated settings to network and socialize
- **Computers** – Some learners have a goal of learning to use the computer and are eager to learn about resources available for teaching the basics of computers. There are also many good computer programs available both online and in CD-ROM format that tutors can access and learn about at an in-service. Taking the time to go through the many resources that are available for tutors online is time well spent.
- **Working with ESL** – Tutors who work with English Language Learners (ESL=English as a Second Language) are always eager to learn new

strategies and share stories. Information about different cultures and how culture affects the learning process is a very useful topic for tutors.

- **Goal setting** – A review of how this integral part of a good personal education plan should be integrated into tutoring is always helpful. Techniques for effective goal setting are wonderful sharing opportunities.
- **Multiple Intelligence Theory** – This approach to learning styles was developed by Howard Gardner and presents the idea that each of us has multiple intelligences and that we should teach to the strengths of our learners. Understanding the variety of learning styles of our learners is a key to successful adult literacy instruction.
- **The Structure of the English Language** – Tutors enjoy additional information about the fundamentals of grammar and reading and writing. Tutors who are retired English teachers are often great instructors for this in-service topic.
- **Citizenship** – The rules for getting your citizenship sometimes change. Helping learners accomplish this goal is very important and can be challenging for tutors.
- **Introduction to a new curriculum** – Tutors are always eager for new materials and this is an opportunity to introduce not only new curriculum materials, but also make tutors aware of all the resources that you have to offer.
- **Strategies for Level 1 students** – This is a big challenge for all tutors and new ideas and strategies are always welcome.

Regular in-service and development opportunities not only improve the quality of instruction for your tutors, they also help them to feel a more integral part of the organization. Retaining tutors is easier when they feel supported and connected to your organization.

There are many resources available online. There are also many wonderful textbooks and workbooks available and new ones are released regularly. The most important feature in selecting resources for adults is that they are targeted toward the needs of adults. They must have content that is oriented to adult concerns and interests. It is best to try to keep your materials as contemporary as possible to hold the interests of the adult learner. Some of the more commonly used texts and workbooks are:

- For Adult Basic Education Learners:
 - *Reading For Today* from Steck Vaughn
 - *Language Exercises for Adults* from Steck Vaughn
 - *Voyager* from New Readers Press
 - *Challenger* from New Readers Press
 - *Laubach Way to Reading* from New Readers Press
 - *Patterns in Spelling* from New Readers Press
 - *Target Spelling* from Steck Vaughn
 - *Vocabulary Connections* from Steck Vaughn
 - *Contemporary Reader* from McGraw Hill
 - *GED Prep* from New Readers Press, Contemporary or Steck Vaughn
 - *Power English* (Literacy and ESL) from Cambridge/Prentice Hall/Regent
 - *Number Power* (math for both) from Contemporary

- For English Language Learners:
 - *Laubach Way to English* from New Readers Press
 - *English No Problem* from New Readers Press
 - *English Yes* from Jamestown Press
 - *Life Prints* from New Readers Press
 - *Survival English* from Prentice Hall
 - *New Oxford Picture Dictionary* from Oxford Press
 - *True Stories Series* from Longman Delta
 - *Side by Side* from Longman Delta
 - *New Interchange* from Cambridge University Press
 - *Contemporary English* from McGraw Hill
 - *Foundations* from Prentice Hall/Regents
 - *Citizenship: Passing the Test and Preparing for the Interview* from NRP

- Computer Software:
 - *Rosetta Stone* – ELL
 - *The Oxford Picture Dictionary Interactive CD-ROM* – ELL
 - *Ellis Language Software* – ELL
 - *Ultimate Phonics CD-ROM* – ABE
 - *Multisensory Reading, Spelling, and Penmanship* – ABE
 - *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* – ABE
 - *PC 100 Series* – Basic computer skills
 - *Lexia SOS* – ABE software

There are also some very effective systems, such as the Wilson Reading System, the Susan Barton Reading and Spelling System and the Orton-Gillingham Method for working with learners who have learning disabilities. All of these, along with others, require training to be used properly.

7) Matching Tutors and Learners Effectively

Overall, it is not a complicated process, but it is important to take care when making matches to ensure that they have a good chance of lasting. Things to consider include the teaching abilities of the tutor in relation to the student's learning needs, the time and day of the lesson, conditions that may be difficult such as a learner with asthma working with someone who smokes, and the location.

Regardless of the rapport that a tutor and learner may have, the above factors should be considered first because they can make or break a match. Trying to match the interest, hobbies and personality styles of the learner and the tutor is the ideal for any matching process, but it may not be possible to make them the first considerations.

Additional factors to consider could be age preferences, gender preferences and nationality/language preferences. When looking at all of the factors talked about here, try to stay as learner-centered as possible. If you are having a challenging time making a match for a particular tutor, see if there is some "wiggle room" with any of the preferences so that you are making a match that considers the most important leanings of the tutor.

Follow-up is crucial, especially in the early weeks. Tutors don't always get back to you until after the match is irretrievable. By taking the initiative to contact the tutors to check on their progress, you have an easier time of troubleshooting with tutors before the problem has mushroomed into a huge situation that might not be fixable. You can provide this support in one of two ways:

- **Individual contacts** - These can be done by either staff or volunteers. If you have a specific set of questions that you ask, the task could very easily be delegated to a volunteer. You should aim to contact them every week or every other week for the first two or three months.
- **Pre-scheduled tutor reunions** – At the end of a training, you can schedule a couple of reunions (one at the end of the first month and one at the end of the second month) for tutors to talk about how tutoring is going, what questions they have, what techniques have worked, etc.

You should also consider making a few follow-up calls to the learner after a match has been made. This can prove to be especially helpful if there is some confusion about the expectations of the learner or if they end up having some concerns about their match that you had not known about. Being able to work through issues that are happening with the learners may help to save matches that would have otherwise ended without anyone knowing why.

Resource:

A copy of an article about tutor-learning matches is located at the end of this section. The actual document is located at

www.pde.state.pa.us/able/lib/able/fieldnotes04/fn04match.pdf

Where Tutors and Learners Meet

It is **never** a good idea to allow your learners and tutors to meet in private homes. Your organization needs to have a policy in place that states that all tutor and learner pairs must meet in a public and approved place. The reasons are for the safety of both the tutor and the learner. While your screening process should eliminate those with obvious intent to do harm, it is not foolproof. A policy for meeting in public helps address this issue, as well as the issue of personal liability. If a learner should injure themselves in a tutor's home, not only the tutor, but the organization may be liable.

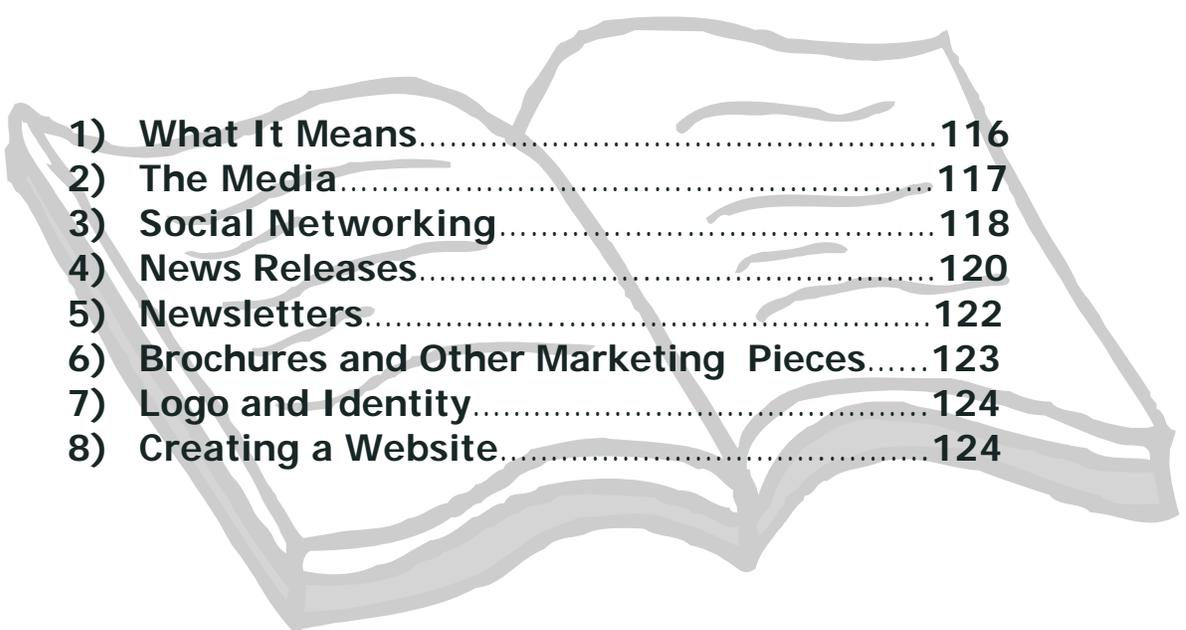
Some organizations may feel that there are too many barriers for their learners to meet outside of their homes, but the risks associated with allowing this should lead an organization to analyze what services they should provide to their learners. The benefits simply do not outweigh the risks. Difficult decisions must often be made in order to best serve the largest number of learners with limited resources.

Some common public places for tutors and learners to meet are:

- Libraries
- Schools
- Churches
- Learning centers
- Job centers

While an approved location needs to be public, an ideal learning setting needs to be private enough that the learner feels comfortable. If the public can obviously see that an adult learner is working with a tutor, it may inhibit learning by creating potential embarrassment. Too many distractions can also create a barrier to good learning. A location with a private room is ideal. Following the lead of where a learner feels comfortable will result in a good learning setting.

Marketing and Public Relations



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Marketing and Public Relations

1) What It Means

In order to develop a successful program, community awareness needs to be nurtured. Marketing and public relations are important vehicles used to educate the community and are an important part of Michigan Literacy's vision "to strengthen Michigan's workforce, families and communities through literacy." Market includes the utilization of various media including public forums such as radio, newspapers, and events. The more aware the community is, chances for rallying support increases. This may result in additional tutors, donors, and students. Most of all, awareness of the issues of literacy may bring about an educated populace that participates more fully in civic life.

The following story entitled, "Promoting Issues and Ideas" by M. Booth and Associates, Inc. and taken from *Reader's Digest*, helps to explain these differences:

"... if the circus is coming to town and you paint a sign saying 'Circus Coming to the Fairground Saturday,' that's advertising. If you put the sign on the back of an elephant and walk it into town, that's promotion. If the elephant walks through the mayor's flower bed, that's publicity. And if you get the mayor to laugh about it, that's public relations. If the town's citizens go to the circus, you show them the many entertainment booths, explain how much fun they'll have spending money at the booths, answer their questions and, ultimately, they spend a lot at the circus, that's sales".

Definitions of these concepts are as follows:

- **Advertising** is the one-way communication of your message and comes in the form of a banner, flier, newspaper, bookmarks, etc.
- **Promotion** involves the giving out the intended message/product to the public and includes letters to the editor, public service announcements, radio or TV spots, news articles, your organization's website/newsletter and word-of-mouth
- **Publicity** stimulates interest in your message/product through a news item
- **Public Relations** are events, communications and/or press coverage that are created to increase an organization's goodwill in the community

2) The Media

As with all aspects of running a Community Literacy Organization, the responsibility of developing and maintaining community relationships can fall upon one individual's shoulders, or it may be various individual's responsibility.

The first step is to develop a list of media contacts that are easy to contact. In most communities, the local chamber of commerce will have a list for print and broadcast media. Your local paper's education editor is an important relationship to foster.

- Get the word out! Let local newspapers and radio stations know the state of literacy in your area and what your organization is doing about it.
- Publicize events related to the program such as tutor training, fund raisers, special events, volunteer and student recognitions.
- Remember to contact the radio station. They are required by law to make Public Service Announcements (PSA). Send them calendar events as well as stories of interest.
- Do it through e-mail or fax. E-mail is a good tool. Information you provide can be easily cut and pasted into whatever format necessary.
- Don't assume that they (the media) have any knowledge of literacy issues.
- Provide the facts in a succinct manner. Publicize learner success stories; notify them about upcoming tutor training or an open house.
- When organizing an event that you would like the media to cover, check their availability. This may seem backward, but it's an angle that may ensure exposure.
- Promote human interest stories about volunteers and learners.
- Announce events and activities to the media and the community
- Find an APR Representative in your area. Accredited in Public Relations (APR) is a voluntary certification program for industry

professionals. It is considered the mark of distinction for those who demonstrate commitment to the profession and to its ethical practice. Those who earn the APR certification demonstrate a broad knowledge, strategic perspective and sound professional judgment of modern public relations. In order to maintain their accreditation, they are required to volunteer their public relations expertise to organizations. You can Google "Accredited in Public Relations" to find a contact near you.

3) Social Networking

On-line social media is quickly becoming a vital way to network and get a message out. The following article, "Getting Good Press Looks Different these Days", written by Kristin Tank, Public Information Officer for the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District, focuses on three strategies to help your organization succeed in this emerging arena.

"The Michigan School Public Relations Association recently offered a social networking workshop. It was packed with those from the education community, including local school districts, education associations, and ISDs. Julielyn Gibbons, an online campaign strategist, provided a fantastic overview of new high-tech tools that can supplement and even replace what used to be considered "good press." She shared some helpful tips on getting started.

"First, realize that the target audiences of parents, students, and community members are already online. Over 80 percent of Americans have regular access to the Internet, and there is no variance by income or education level. There is a higher percentage of Internet use by minorities. Two-thirds of Internet users are over 18, the age of one of our primary stakeholder groups: taxpayers.

"Of those online, 35 percent regularly use social networking sites like Facebook, Linked In, or MySpace. Of those using social networking sites, 95 percent use them for personal reasons, which means they are considered "authentic" ways to communicate. Facebook, for example, has more than 175 million active users, while its fastest growing demographic is made up of those 30 years old and older. As of December 2008, 11 percent of online American adults said they used a service like Twitter or another service that allowed them to share updates about themselves or to see the updates of others. (To learn more visit <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1093/generations-online>.)

“Second, make the use of social media part of the larger school communications plan. Creating a Facebook site or establishing a Twitter account will only be truly effective if it is part of a bigger plan. Ask yourself what communications objectives your school has, who the key audiences are that you are trying to reach, and which social media tactics will help meet those objectives. Also consider whether or not you are ready for an ongoing commitment to social media tools. How will you implement your strategy? What will it cost? How will you measure your efforts? You will also need a policy that governs your school’s use of social media tools.

“Third, experiment with social networking and new media products yourself to determine how they might work for your school. (Hint: Enlist the help of someone or an organization who already uses these tools) On your own personal time, establish and use a personal Facebook (www.facebook.com) site. Facebook is highly interactive and encourages two-way communication. Twitter (www.twitter.com) may be a great way to update your staff, students, and parents about news from your school and drive traffic to your school website. It tends to be more of a one-way communications tool and can be great for alerting others to new press releases. Many schools are successfully using blogs and emails as well. Ms. Gibbons reinforced the value of sending emails to lists of your key communicators or others with whom you want to connect. She suggested using short, attention-grabbing subject lines to prompt your audience to open them.

“The bottom line is that “good press” may be no further away than the computer on your desk. Instead of just hoping that the newspaper will print a press release, post it to your website, blog about it, tweet about it, write about it, and post a related photo on your social networking page. There’s more than one way to get a good message out.”

-Getting Good Press Looks Different these Days,
by Kristin Tank, Public Information Officer for the Muskegon Area
Intermediate School District

Sources:

Barbara Felix, Executive Director, Literacy Services of Wisconsin Tom Heinen, Reporter, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Lou Ann Novak, APR, Senior Staff Consultant — External Communications, Verizon

Judy Stone, Coordinator, Walworth County Literacy Council

4) News Releases

There are certain points to keep in mind when writing a news release:

Make sure your news is newsworthy. Provide the media with pertinent information, answering the basic reporter questions of “Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How”. You may save yourself some work by calling the education editor to see if they are interested in the story. If it peaks interest, they may assign a reporter to cover it and do most of the leg work.

- Start the story with a strong headline and the first paragraph should give the crux of the story. The rest of the article gives the detail.
- Expect that your article is what the media will use, so write it well and have it reviewed. Journalists may pick up a news release and run it in their publications without modifying it. They may also use news releases as a springboard for larger feature stories.
- Tell an honest, factual story. Journalists are naturally skeptical. If your story sounds too good to be true, it may be dismissed by the media.
- Use an active, not passive, voice. Action words, such as “partnered” instead of “has entered into a partnership” gives a story energy.
- Avoid ornate or redundant language. Verbosity takes away from the story. Be concise and make each word count.
- Avoid using the exclamation point (!). Hype, in addition to embellished success stories, can destroy credibility.
- Include your story “hook” in the e-mail “subject Line.” Getting the reporter’s attention with the crux of your story in that subject line increases the chances of it being published. Once you establish a relationship with the media representative, they will recognize your e-mails and phone calls. They may even start to come to you as the “source” for literacy issues.
- Your news release should end with a short paragraph that describes your organization, its mission, its services and a brief history. Keep an electronic copy of this short paragraph on your computer and cut and paste it into your release.

Sources:

www.prweb.com/pressreleasetips.php#content#content

Barbara Felix, Executive Director, Literacy Services of Wisconsin Tom Heinen, Reporter, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Template for a standard news release:

Headline Announces News in Title Case, ideally under 80 Characters

The summary paragraph is a little longer synopsis of the news, elaborating on the news in the headline in one to four sentences. The summary uses sentence case, with standard capitalization and punctuation.

City, State, (PRWEB) Month 1, 2007 - The lead sentence contains the most important information in 25 words or less. Grab your reader's attention here by simply stating the news you have to announce. Do not assume the reader has read your headline or summary paragraph; the lead should stand on its own.

A news release, like a news story, keeps sentences and paragraphs short, about three or four lines per paragraph. The first couple of paragraphs should answer who, what, when, where, why, and how questions. The news media may take news information from a news release to craft a news or feature article to may use information in the release word-for-word, but a news release does not, itself, an article or reprint.

The standard press release is 300 to 800 words and written in a word processing program that checks spelling and grammar.

The ideal headline is 80 characters long. Use title case in the headline only, capitalize every word except for prepositions and articles of three characters or less.

The rest of the news release expounds on the information provided in the lead paragraph. It includes quotes from key staff, customers or subject matter experts. It contains more details about the news you have to tell, which can be about something unique or controversial or about a prominent person, place or thing.

Typical topics for a news release include announcements of new services or of strategic partnerships, the receipt of an award, the launch of a new website. The tone is neutral and objective, not full of hype. Avoid directly addressing your target audience. Do not use "I", "we", and "you" outside of a director quotation period.

About XYZ Company:

Contact:

555-555-5555

<http://www.prweb.com>

Adapted from PR Web, PRESS RELEASE NEWSWIRE

5) Newsletters

Your organization's own newsletter is a perfect way to promote your literacy program, educate constituents on literacy facts, showcase accomplishments, and thank those who have made the program a success.

- Determine if your audience includes members, donors, volunteers, students, neighborhood associations, etc. A well constructed newsletter can get your mission and message across to a diverse audience.
- Make sure to include a thank you to donors, volunteers, and supporters.
- Ask others to write articles and use photos of the events and of your organization "in action".
- Have at least two people proofread your newsletter.
- If it makes sense, go electronic. Not everyone on your mailing list will have access to a computer, though. "Online" may leave out part of your audience.
- Highlight events with corporate sponsors.
- Pay attention to your layout. Put the most important stories on the front page. A front page article that continues on an inner page will entice the reader to open the newsletter and discover other interesting articles.
- Pictures are worth a thousand words. Photos help tell the story and at the same time convey that your literacy efforts involve and touch people.
- A professional, attractive, interesting newsletter is important. If no one in your organization possesses the skills necessary, it may be worth the money to have a professional put together what you write.

Sources:

Pat Piazza, Co-editor and Layout/Design Artist of *Stella Highlights*, Milwaukee Achiever Literary Services' newsletter

Mary Moze and Kathy Mulvey, Co-editors of *The Exchange*, Greater Milwaukee Literacy Coalition's newsletter

Resources:

"Create a Newsletter Using Publisher." Microsoft Corporation 2006. www.microsoft.com/malaysia/sma/11business/products/howto/create_newsletter.mspx

Fanson, Barbara A. Producing a First-Class Newsletter: A guide to planning, writing, editing, designing, photography, production, and printing. Self-Counsel Press, (a division of) International Self-Counsel Press Ltd. Canada and U.S.A.

Gregory, H. How to Make NEWSLETTERS, BROCHURES, & OTHER GOOD STUFF Without a Computer System. Pinstripe Publishing. 1987.

Williams, Patricia A. Creating and Producing the Perfect Newsletter. Scott Foresman and Company. 1990

6) Brochures and Other Marketing Pieces

Brochures are an important tool for promoting your program. Brochures can be circulated at volunteer fairs, local libraries, faith communities, neighborhood social service agencies, and acquaintances who want to “spread the word”.

Keep the following in mind when creating your brochure:

- The cover should catch the viewer’s attention. People take only 3-5 seconds to make the decision if the brochure is worth reading. Use a photo or graphic that is interesting and a line or two that says who you are and what you are about. Put the educational information inside of the brochure.
- Text should be short and to the point. Avoid paragraphs, people want to get the information quickly. Bullet points work well. Use larger point size text (12 point), good spacing and group information. The reader can scan what they believe to pertain to them quickly and easily, skipping what they are not interested in.
- Always include an action statement and contact information. As a nonprofit literacy provider, you want people to call, donate or volunteer. Include your organization’s phone number, website and e-mail. Suggested actions can motivate the reader to make the next step. *“To find out how to volunteer as a tutor, call xxx-xxx-xxxx.” “Make a difference today! Call xxx-xxx-xxxx.”*
- Avoid clutter. Create a look that is similar to other communication pieces your organization distributes. Logos and color can create that look, which is known as “branding”.

Other marketing pieces include:

Bookmarks – an inexpensive way of getting the message out, and very appropriate for a literacy organization. They can be made on your own computer. Check out laminating the book mark or print them on heavier, cardstock paper.

Banners – a great way to catch the public eye. Keep the message simple, include your organization’s name and a small catch phrase. A portable banner is the perfect piece to take to fairs and display at fundraisers or other events.

Marquee signs – before entering into an agreement, check the traffic patterns of the marquee’s location. You want the right message to reach the right target audience.

Use the same logo, tagline and colors on each piece of marketing to create a consistent recognizable look for your organization.

7) Logo and Identity

Your logo is your organization’s identity. Once it is developed, it should be displayed respectfully. It should express what you are about at a glance. A logo should not be used, for example, as a bullet point or a page marker. Place your logo at a similar position on your brochure, website, and other marketing pieces. Do not change the color of your logo. It is more likely to be remembered and recognized at a glance if it is not modified on your different marketing pieces.

Things to keep in mind when developing your logo:

- Does it express at a glance who you are and what you do?
- Is it unique enough not to be confused with any other organization’s logo?
- If you work primarily with adults, does it convey an adult organization or is it too childish?
- What is the first thing that strikes you when you look at it?
- What do others think of it?

Creating a logo can be tedious and expensive. If hiring a professional does not work within your budget, check with a local college or university and see if there may be an art or marketing student that is willing to help you out.

8) Creating a Website

Creating a website requires a well laid out plan. It can provide basic information, links to resources, and event registration. Take some time to explore other literacy sites and determine what is appropriate for your organization. Remember to give your website the same branding look as you do for your brochure and other communication pieces. Keeping your website updated will give interested people coming back and/or sending others to your website.

There are a number of on line companies eager to help you create your own website. Costs of having a website include the design costs (1,000 to \$5000), domain costs which entitles you to the address you choose (about \$20 for the domain name plus \$10 to \$15 per month), and for hosting the website (\$7.00 to

as much as \$200 per month). Website providers include Datarealm Internet services at www.serve.com and www.GoDaddy.com.

There are ways to work around the expensive investment of web design development by professionals. Contact a local technical college or university and invite a student who needs to complete a technology project to develop your website. It is a win for your organization and it is a win for the students, as well, because they get experience and have the opportunity to get their name out in the community. There are also some sites that will design and host a nonprofit website for free. One of those sites is www.grassroots.org.

Website software provides different capabilities and range in cost from \$30 to \$800. You do not need to be able to write in HTML to work on a website. Much of the software now available uses WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) and offers a program that lets you view your layout on the screen as you work, looking pretty much the way it will display on a Web browser.

A free website editor that comes highly recommended by Wisconsin Literacy is Nvu 1.0. You can download this editor at www.nvu.com.

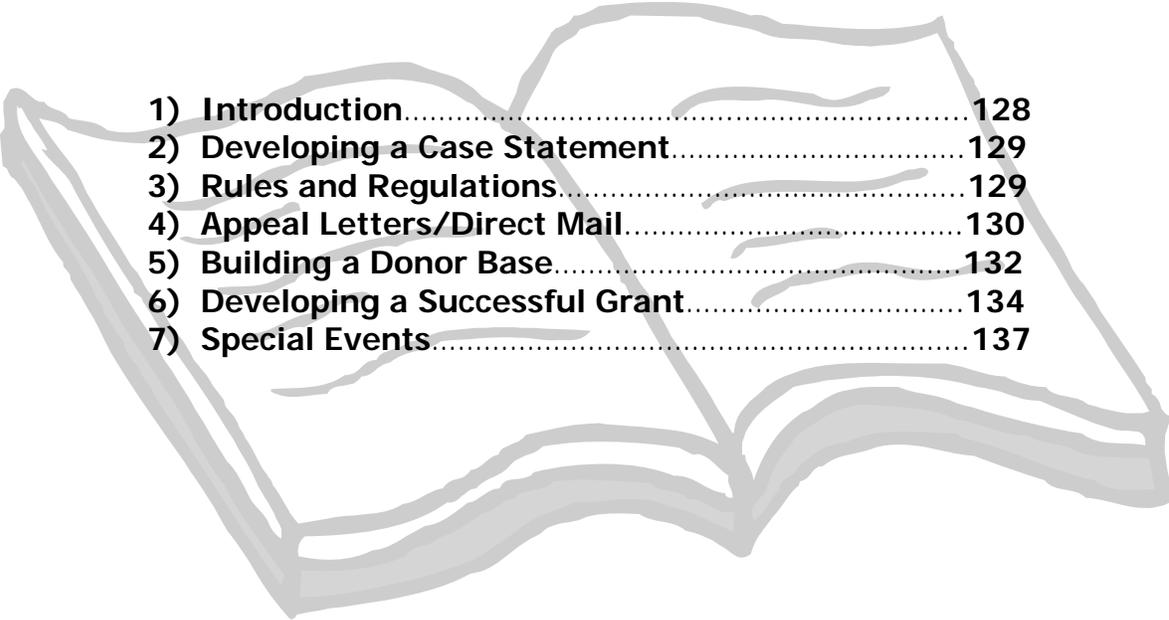
Other website editors include:

- Adobe Dream Weaver
- Microsoft Front Page
- Net Objects Fusion 9
- Go Live CS2
- Coffee Cup

A helpful website for evaluating Web services is www.epinions.com. Customers post their evaluations of different companies on this site. It is time well spent to read the customers' comments regarding the price and the services.

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Fundraising

1) Introduction to Fundraising

Developing a fundraising plan involves a continuous cycle of planning, solicitation and evaluation. Raising funds is a competitive endeavor and most nonprofit organizations rely on a variety of funding sources to meet budget needs. Most nonprofit organizations find that they need to take an organized, strategic approach to fundraising in order to meet program and budget goals. A well-planned, diversified funding strategy also helps the sustainability of the organization if one of the funding sources goes away.

Developing a fundraising plan will help you think strategically about the needs of your organization, the capacity of your community and the interests of potential funding targets. The components of a fundraising plan might include:

- clarifying your organization's overall program plans and budget needs
- developing a case statement
- identifying potential funding partners
- preparing the fundraising plan and strategies
- implementing the fundraising activities
- evaluating the effectiveness of the fundraising activities

There are a variety of fundraising methods that can be used. This chapter will address:

- Appeal Letters, which can be an annual or year-round effort to meet the organization's general income needs or to address a specific need
- Grant writing
- Special Events

Other fundraising methods include:

- Special Gifts – the solicitation of donations, often large gifts, for specific purposes
- Capital Campaigns – raise funds to meet the capital or asset-building needs of the organization
- Endowments and Planned Giving – support the long-term sustainability of the organization through investments, estates, bequests, wills, etc.

Consulting fundraising, legal and/or accounting professionals is recommended before implementing these fundraising strategies.

2) Developing a Case Statement

Literacy Councils – like other nonprofit organizations – are formed to meet a specific need in the community. An important first step in developing a plan for fundraising is to create a Case Statement or Statement of Need that makes clear to potential funders why they should support the cause. Once an organization has created a general case statement defining key information that needs to be communicated to a range of donors, it can be adapted to meet the needs of specific donors or tailored to support various fundraising activities.

The elements of a Case Statement:

- Describe the organization and its activities – include your mission statement
- Identify and state the need that will be addressed
- Use statistics, data and other information available at local, regional, state or national levels that support the need
- State how the organization will address the need
- Present the organization's history and relate recent successes to illustrate the ability to make a difference.
- State how those receiving the funds, the community-at-large and the funders will benefit
- Address the experience and capability of the staff or volunteers of the organization as responsible stewards of funds

3) Rules and Regulations

Before beginning to solicit donations or raise funds, make sure you have followed appropriate rules and guidelines required by the State of Michigan and/or the IRS. This might include determining if your organization meets the IRS criteria for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status (IRS Publication 557), completing and filing Articles of Incorporation, determining if you need to apply for a license to solicit funds and other steps. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation website provides this information:

"If a nonprofit organization is soliciting charitable contributions from the public, it may need to be licensed and/or registered with the Department of Attorney General's Charitable Trust Section, Post Office Box 30214, Lansing, Michigan 48909; telephone 517.373.1152. When contacted, the Attorney General's Office will mail you (at no charge) an "Initial Charitable Trust/Charitable Solicitation Questionnaire," or online you may download it from the Attorney General's website at www.michigan.gov/ag."

Additional Resources

- The Michigan Nonprofit Association has a "Getting Started" packet for non-profit organizations. Contact information: 517.492.2400 or <http://www.mnaonline.org>.

- The latest nonprofit news is available at <http://www.michigannonprofit.com>.
- Visit the State of Michigan website at www.Michigan.gov and search “Nonprofit Organizations”

4) Appeal Letters/Direct Mail

While people give in support of organizations any time of the year, an appeal letter can be especially useful in highlighting a specific need of the organization or it can be part of an annual fund campaign to support the general operations of the organization.

The challenge is to write a letter that will stand out among all the other letters from all the other nonprofits. In some communities, businesses receive multiple requests for donations every day. You need to convince the reader that a donation given to your organization is money well spent and will be used to support an important service in the community.

Components of an appeal letter

The components of an appeal letter include:

- A clearly stated need – See the discussion about developing a case statement earlier in this chapter. People need to know that a need exists in the community and how your organization will provide services to meet that need.
- A direct ask – Be sure you specifically ask for financial support, and in the case of a specific need for the organization, how the donation will help start a program, recruit and train a specified number of tutors, etc. Give them something tangible so they know their contribution will make a difference.
- Show gratitude – Thank contributors for taking time to consider a gift to your organization. If the letter is to a previous donor, be sure to thank that person for past support at the beginning of the letter.
- Personal signature – This helps those who receive your letter know that a real person is behind the request. For donors you know personally, include a short, hand-written note at the bottom so it is more personal than merely a form letter.

There are different opinions about the appropriate length of an appeal letter. Some believe that it should be no more than one page, with supporting statistics on an insert or the back of the letter. Others believe a longer letter allows more of the

organization's stories to get out. Organizations have demonstrated success with both types of letters, so it would depend on your writing style (is it succinct, or do you like to tell longer stories?) and what you hope to achieve. Either way, make sure your letter quickly delivers the desired message. Too much information and the reader might lose interest before he gets to "the ask."

Matching Gifts

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage their employees to contribute to charitable organizations. Matching gifts are funds given from a business to a nonprofit organization that match a contribution that one of their employees has given to the nonprofit. Usually the company provides a form for the nonprofit to verify a contribution received by one of its employees.

Matching gifts programs are underutilized for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, employees are not aware that their company has a matching gifts program. Nonprofits may not know which companies offer matching gifts programs or don't know where donors are employed to request they seek the matching gift. It's a good idea to promote matching gifts as an option in newsletters and other communications and encourage donors to check with their employer.

Like all donations, thank everyone involved when you receive the matching gift – the original donor for doubling the contribution in this way and the company that matched the gift.

On-line Donations

Online transactions are becoming commonplace, including making charitable contributions. According to research, donors who give online tend to give larger gifts.

Online giving also sets an organization up to benefit from "impulse giving." Just like grocery stores strategically place goods on either side of you as you wait to go through the checkout, people will often be moved to donate if you have a button on your website making this option immediately available.

If your organization can't process credit cards, check out a third-party vendor that will provide this service to your organization for a set-up fee and a percentage of each donation made. Some vendors may also charge a monthly fee and a transaction fee but offer more services in return. You and your board must determine what is adequate for your organization's needs.

Additional Resources

- [Writeexpress.com/fundraising-letter.html](http://writeexpress.com/fundraising-letter.html)
- http://hopeco.com/fundraising_letter.htm
- ezinearticles.com/?How-to-Write-an-Effective-Fundraising-Letter&id+397545

5) Building a Donor Base

The first step in building a donor base is to develop a plan that provides a clear picture of your goals, how you will meet the goals and how you will measure success. Keep in mind that successful fundraising is not always measured just by dollars raised. You should have goals related to the number of repeat donors who give to your organization and the length of time (number of years) that individual donors have contributed. Getting new donors takes a lot of time and effort – keeping the ones you have makes your fundraising efforts more efficient. According to “Building Donor Loyalty” on the Fund-Raising Forum, “the longer a donor gives to an organization the more likely those gifts are to grow in size and frequency.” So those who started out as contributors to a special event might eventually become donors of a major gift.

Also set goals related to the number of donors who contribute. If you send out an appeal letter that generates 10% more than your goal, but you have a drop in the number of donors, you should be concerned about the decline in your donor base.

Growing Your Donor Base

Studies show that people who volunteer are more likely to donate generously. It makes sense that volunteers understand first-hand the importance of the service the organization provides and may be willing to provide financial support in addition to their volunteer commitment. Don't overlook this significant source of potential donors.

Include those who have volunteered or participated in a special event on behalf of your organization. Also remember to reconnect with former donors periodically. It's possible their situation has changed or you are now offering a program or conducting a campaign that interests them. In fact, everyone you meet should be considered a potential donor, so don't forget to talk about your organization and its services every chance you get!

The size of your list is critical because the national response rate to direct mail is only about 3%. Here are a few suggestions on building your mailing list: Get other people's lists! Start with the Chamber of Commerce. Go to associations – builders, contractors, local bar associations and other professional groups. Churches and civic organizations have member lists they might be willing to share.

It's About Relationships

Working with donors is really about building relationships. Make sure your plan includes opportunities to develop relationships with people, companies or organizations.

Find out why they donated. Did they have a friend or relative who struggled with illiteracy? Do they work for a company this is connected to the cause of literacy? Have they tutored in the past and found it gratifying? Some people give merely for the social

recognition or for a sense of belonging. Whatever the reasons, keep track of them and take them into consideration when you interact with donors. Understanding why people give can help when crafting your appeal letter.

Get donors involved. Is there an appropriate volunteer role for a donor – tutor, serving on a board or committee, coordinating a special event? Even if the donor declines, they will feel honored that you asked.

Stay in touch. Make sure donors know what is happening within your organization so that they know their contributions are being put to good use. Send newsletters or e-newsletters. Especially with higher level donors, consider sending a periodic email with an anecdote from a tutor report and a note saying, “Thanks for making this happen!”

6) Developing a Successful Grant

Grant writing takes time, is labor intensive, and is often an undertaking of love. To make the most out of these efforts, it is important that the purpose of the grant is consistent with the mission of your agency.

Often agencies learn of funding opportunities through volunteers or others who are associated with the non-profit. In the event that a new source of funding is pursued, it is important to contact the liaison of the foundation/funding source and find out what the process is for approaching their organization. A **letter of intent** may be required as step one. This is an introduction of your agency and a small description of the project for which you are seeking funds.

In certain situations, such as with government funding agencies or United Way, the agencies will put out a **Request for Proposals (RFP)**. For example, a MichiganWorks! agency may need to collaborate with a literacy agency in order to have quality tutoring available for individuals who do not assess at the minimal reading level. The RFP will be specific on how the applicants are to proceed. Following the RFP is critical for a grant request to be successful.

A grant proposal typically has ten components:

1. **Cover letter** on the agency's letter head that contains a brief description of the proposal (1-2 sentences), the amount requested, and the overall goal.
2. **Executive Summary/Abstract** is a succinct description of the entire proposal. It should be a clear concise summary of problem, program purpose, duplicable product, and evaluation process.
3. The **Introduction** includes important information that would not be included otherwise such as the agency's mission, history (including length of service), major indicators of capacity to operate programs efficiently and effectively, tax exemption status (501) (c) (3) status, list of collaborative partners, and a plan for sustainability.
4. **Statement of Need** including statistical information and their sources.
5. **Objectives/Outcomes** for the project. Be certain to use the vocabulary found in the grant guidelines. Objectives and outcomes must be measurable, time-based, and realistic.
6. **Project Description/Work Plan/Time Line** is second in importance only to the objectives and outcomes. Often these two sections are weighted the heaviest among grant reviewers.

A work plan or timeline is often presented in a graph or table format.

While the project description is in narrative form, this section will describe **who** the clients are that are being served, **what** services are being provided, **what** activities need to take place, and **what** outreach efforts are made, **where** will the services be provided, **when** will the services be provided, **with whom** will you collaborate in order to provide the services, and **why** your agency is uniquely qualified to provide these services.

7. A well developed **Budget** is detailed and realistic. It is based on program design and RFP guidelines.
8. **Evaluation** will measure goals and objectives of the program as they affect the local problem. Align with research requirements of RFP. Develop a system for records retention and examination. Indicate if the evaluation is outsourced.
9. Close with a two or three paragraph **Conclusion**. Summarize proposal's main points and how the community will benefit from the completion of this project.
10. **Appendices and Table of Contents** include additions to proposal, letters of support that are in line with RFP requirements and directly relate to program or need. Include an accurate, easy to read table of contents complete with corresponding page numbers.

Develop a Grant Writing Team

- **Team Leader:** Group facilitator, oversees entire grant project
- **Writer:** Strong grammar and stylistic writing skills, ability to blend different writing styles into one voice
- **Word Processor/Publisher:** Strong command of computer software, graphics design and layout
- **Needs Assessment Coordinator:** Research local community needs, review of literature, strong Internet skills
- **Community Liaison:** Respected member of the local community, rally support, marketing
- **Budget Coordinator:** Strong command of numbers, create realistic, detailed, program related budgets

After the proposal is written –

- **PROOF READ**

- Use a proof reader who is not part of the writing team who will:
 - Ensure the accuracy of grammatical rules
 - Check readability, flow, understandability
 - Review layout and design, align with requirements of RFP
 - Check signature pages

- **PROOF READ AGAIN!**

- Confirm that the number of copies submitted meets the requirements of the RFP. Keep one complete copy on file at your agency.
- Hand-deliver the proposal if possible. The face to face contact enriches the relationship. If it cannot be hand delivered, make sure it is mailed well before the due date.
- Even if the proposal is not funded, write a thank-you note to the funding agency expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to apply and your hopes to maintain a relationship with respect to future funding opportunities.

Sources:

Finding Funding Grantwriting for the Financially Challenged Educator: Earnest W. Brewer, Charles M. Achillies, Jay R Fuhrman

Research Associates Certified Grants Specialist course manual
www.fdncenter.org

American Association of Fundraising Counsel, aafr.org

Michigan Nonprofit Association: MNA Links Linking Nonprofits to Resources

Society for Nonprofit Organizations: Nonprofit World Magazine Volume 22, Number 4, July/Aug 04

Laubach Literacy Action: LitScape

www.CDPublications.com

http://target.com/target_group/community_giving/index.jhtml

www.benjerry.com/foundation/guidelines.html

Resources:

Grobman, Gary M. The Nonprofit Handbook, Third Edition

Hale, Jr., Phale D. Writing Grant Proposals That Win. Second Edition. An Aspen Publication

Thompson, Waddy. The Complete Idiot's Guide to Grant Writing.

7) Special Events

Special events are one-time or annual fundraising events that are often a component of an organization's overall fundraising plan. Special event fundraisers work best when the organization sets a specific goal, rather than using it to close a budget gap. Special events can serve a variety of purposes. They can help an organization:

- raise funds
- raise awareness
- recruit volunteers
- make connections with the business community
- obtain media exposure

While an organization's main goal in planning a special event might be to raise funds, it is a good idea to have other outcomes in mind when planning it. Special events can help build the strong network necessary to grow your organization, meet your volunteer needs and develop relationships that could eventually expand your donor base.

Things to take into account when planning a special event:

Honorary Chairperson

An Honorary Chairperson should be someone who is well-known, well-respected and active in your community. The Honorary Chairperson should be willing to use his or her influence to open doors for sponsorship and generate enthusiasm from community members by promoting the event through their community connections and interactions.

Back-up plan

When planning your special event, anticipate things that could go wrong and make contingency plans, whether it's an alternate date in case of inclement weather or a generator in case of a power outage.

Sponsorships

A sponsorship program is the key to securing most of the money raised at the event. Sponsors often are given special consideration and recognition during the promotion of and at the event. This might include extra event tickets or registrations, acknowledgement in event programs, and/or recognition on signage and from the podium.

Not all sponsorships need to be monetary. For example, you can solicit grocery stores or restaurants to provide food, or print shops to print marketing materials and programs. In-kind donations can sometimes be easier to obtain than monetary donations. Retailers know that event participants get a sampling or see a product,

which may influence them to buy the product in the future. For this reason, companies could use either their marketing or their philanthropic budgets to support sponsorship.

Create an event program

The program can be used for several purposes, such as to:

- provide a schedule or outline of what will take place during the event
- recognize and thank sponsors, including their names and logos
- share information about your organization and its services
- solicit volunteers

Recruit Volunteers

Use volunteers both during the event and for planning the event. Involve volunteers on the planning committee so that the work can be divided into various groups or subcommittees, i.e. sponsorship, marketing, program. Including a diverse group of volunteers generates new ideas and opens your event to new audiences.

Have plenty of volunteers on the day of the event, including a couple extra people to cover for anyone who can't make it due to illness or a family or work emergency.

Event insurance

You may need additional liability or other insurance for your event. Check with your organization's insurance provider to determine the type and amount of coverage you may need.

Check with local, county and/or state officials to see if there are any required permits needed to run your special event. If you are holding a raffle, make sure you have the appropriate permit, for example. Or, if you are holding a large outdoor event, additional regulations may apply.

Examples of Popular Literacy-related Events

Scrabble® Events

Scrabble® tournaments are popular with literacy organizations because they are fun events that relate to literacy. Hosting a Scrabble® event is a great way to accomplish multiple objectives – generate income, motivate volunteers, get the public's attention, and involve lots of people.

They are relatively easy to put together – an Internet search will identify many literacy organizations already doing this event. Many are willing to share their rules, materials and experiences.

Only a few basic items are needed for your first event, including copies of the Scrabble® game, dictionaries (multiple copies of the same publisher and edition) and a timer.

The National Scrabble® Association provides guidelines and ideas for organizations wanting to host a Scrabble® event. Check it out at <http://scrabble-assoc.com/lva/plw-step.pdf>

Spelling Bee

Spelling Bees are another event hosted by literacy organizations around the country because they relate to literacy. The Spelling Bee is a unique fundraising event that usually has three-member teams competing against each other. Teams registering for the event represent companies, government, education groups, libraries, civic groups, and nonprofit organizations. An Internet search will identify some programs to contact for more information.

Other events hosted by Michigan literacy organizations:

World's Greatest Dessert Party, hosted by the Literacy Council of Midland County is held every year on "Fat Tuesday." The organization has "owned that date" for more than a decade. Desserts are donated by restaurants, bakeries, school and college food services and some individuals so the overhead can be kept low. Tickets range in the \$15-\$20 area. The event started out small, but over 22 years has grown with annual attendance of more than 800 in 2009. Now, live music, and online auction and a silent auction, filled with unique gifts and fun stuff, are part of the evening. For more information, contact: www.literacymidland.org or info@literacymidland.org

Camel Races are hosted by the Family Literacy Center in Lapeer County and the Lapeer District Library. At this event, the literacy council offers 24 camels for sale. The sponsors creatively decorate the camels, which are four-foot-tall plywood cutouts mounted on wheeled bases, to represent their business or organization. Guests bet on their favorites and awards are given for "best-dressed" camel. For more information, contact: (810) 664-2737 or ican@readlapeer.org

The **Family Literacy Center Benefit Auction** is hosted by The Family Literacy Center in Lapeer County. Each year around February, the Family Literacy Center holds its most successful fund raiser, the Benefit Auction and Dinner. A gourmet dinner and appetizers are enjoyed by guests and an auction is held. Auction items include unique, high-quality objects d'art, trips, services, dinners, one of a kind pieces, hand-crafted furniture, autographed items and specialty items (bikes, tools, etc.) For more information, contact: (810) 664-2737 or ican@readlapeer.org

The **Non-Attending Tea Party** is also hosted by The Literacy Council of Bay County. This is an annual "non-attending" special event by mail – the Non-Attending Tea Party! The literacy council sends out a brochure using an *Alice in Wonderland* graphic and clever language, such as: "Can we possibly exceed the mirth and mayhem of last year – when no one showed up? Let's see how many folks we can get to not show up this

year!" The brochure encourages people to take an hour, brew a cup of tea and read the book they've been meaning to read all year. A tea bag is included with the brochure, along with a request for a \$20 donation. For more information, contact (989) 686-8700

The Literacy Council of Bay County is also looking at implementing a **"Plant the Seeds of Literacy" non-attending campaign**. Similar to the tea-party, a brochure or letter asks people to help plant the seeds of literacy and includes a packet of seeds and a request for a donation along with a return envelope. A prize could be offered to the largest donor, such as garden tools donated from an area store.

Some communities host a **"Dancing with the Stars"** event every year on the same night as the Academy Awards. It is held in a location where a number of televisions can be viewed. The event includes a catered dinner, drinks and dancing to live music. One agency sold 300 tickets at \$75 per person.

The Taste of Diversity event is held on Martin Luther King Day. Area restaurants provide the food and serve it buffet style. About 200 attend. Since the food was donated the ticket prices are more in the \$25 range. Live music is provided.

Pancake and sausage suppers draw a good crowd. Ticket prices can be held to \$5.00. The event is held on the Thursday before Lent. More than 1900 people were served.

Golf outings are very common in Michigan, to the point that in some communities they are over-done. Contact area golf courses and get recommendations. Timing is important. Try to keep your event as far as possible from other organizations that are also into fundraising.

A new twist on the golf idea is the **"Golf Ball Drop."** Numbered golf balls are "sold" and on the day of the event the balls are hauled up in a tethered hot air balloon and dropped on a target. Closest to the target are the winners. This can be done in any grassy area, parks, golf courses, and baseball or football fields. Tickets are \$5-\$10.

Community Events

Many local events or organizations – summer festivals, air shows, music-in-the-park – offer opportunities for nonprofit organizations to recruit volunteers to sell food, take tickets or serve in some other support capacity and in return receive proceeds from the event.

Also, check for opportunities that local retailer's in your area might offer to raise money. Examples include Younker's Community Day events and gift wrapping or a voucher program through Barnes & Noble.

Raffles and Auctions:

Raffles are probably the most flexible fund raisers. They can be incorporated into events or stand alone events. Nearly anything can be raffled – cash, cars trips, airline tickets and more. Try to get the items donated. Reverse raffles work well at events. In a reverse raffle the LAST number drawn is the winner. Tickets can be higher priced and a limited number sold or sales can go all out.

Live auctions, silent auctions and online auctions can earn money with a low overhead as well.

As with any event, try to sell tickets online!

Check on state and local regulations for holding raffles and auctions.