

Case Statements Made Easy

Wenatchee Valley College

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Presented by:

ACCG:avenue2possibilities LLP

Our mission is to provide an avenue to possibilities for people and organizations.

An avenue is a way of access or a conduit for pursuing a desired objective.

Possibilities are potential or prospective values; one's greatest or highest degree of ability, capacity or power.

The Need For Business Planning

If an organization does not recognize the consequences (costs) of its objectives and *organize* itself to be structured to maintain its *needs* through appropriate goals and actions to fulfill on those *needs*, then it will go out of existence.

When one looks at organizations over time, the budget grows in direct proportion to the costs of providing the *Products and Services*. With **soft costs** becoming **hard costs** as the organization grows (staffing, phone, supplies, marketing & publicity) the vision and mission of the organization generate real world costs and drive up its financial requirements as well.

Organizations are now facing growth and change in a variety of areas. These are succinctly presented in Judith Simon's book The 5 Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations*. Emerging from the **Founding Stage** and the key question of *How are we going to pull this off each year?* they enter the **Growing Stage** and face the question, *How can we build this organization to be viable?*

In the **Growing Stage** the organization *sees the path toward achieving its vision and wants to traverse it. Opportunities to build and grow are numerous, but so are the demands for administrative accountability. It is perhaps the most exciting time in the organization's life, but also requires the most growth in the many organizational arenas.*

After the **Growing Stage** comes the **Produce and Sustain Stage** and the key question, *How can we sustain the momentum?* In the **Produce and Sustain Stage** the organization *takes steps that will stabilize the organization in the present, address any areas of tension and conflict that are emerging and create security for the organization's future.*

By creating a **Business Plan**, an organization grows around *business* structures and sustainable strategies that govern practices and procedures across all actions, decisions, policies, programs, projects, and resource allocations. The **Business Plan** will supply information that provides a source with which to help identify the most effective ways and means to meet its business objectives.

* Simon, Judith Sharken *The 5 Stages of Non-Profit Management*, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, St. Paul, MN, © 2001, All Rights Reserved

Organizational Development Program to establish a firm foundation on which to build a sustainable future.

Below is a example of a timeline for a 3-month program to address organizational governance, financing, administrative systems, products & services, and marketing.

Step One

When: May
Project: Organizational Mission
Processes: Stakeholder analysis
Interviews with current board members
Mission/Vision workshop
Reports
Deliverables: Revised Mission Statement
Vision Statement
Values Statement
Preliminary SWOT analysis
Elements of Case Statement

Step Two

When: June
Project: Case Statement
Processes: Research & Interviews
Deliverables: Board Development Plan
Board Recruitment Package
Case for Support report (10 to 20 pages)
Fund raising materials for donor proposals
Funding sources (grants)

Step Three

When: July
Project: Fundraising
Processes: Form & train fund development committee
Design annual giving program
Donor stewardship program
Gift solicitation training
Grant Stewardship
Earned Income
Deliverables: Development committee
Calendar of solicitations, solicitation training
Point of Entry Event; Ask Event
Software, volunteer training
On-going grant research & cultivation
Form & train finance committee

This program is sequential; each step builds on the previous processes and deliverables. These steps are consistent with and would become part of a future Business Plan.

Business Plan Table of Contents

1.0	Executive Summary	1
2.0	Past History and Present Situation	
2.1	The Need for Business Planning	2
2.2	The Culture of Volunteer Leadership and Governance	6
2.3	Timeline	7
3.0	Strategic Plan for 2005 – 2007	
3.1	Mission Statement	8
3.2	Vision Statement	8
3.3	Organizational Values	8
3.4	Stakeholder Analysis	9
3.5	Strengths	11
3.6	Weaknesses	13
3.7	Opportunities	14
3.8	Threats	16
3.9	Critical Issues	17
4.0	Goals, Strategies and Objectives	
	Critical Issue 1 – Governance	18
	Critical Issue 2 – Financing	20
	Critical Issue 3 – Staffing & Volunteers	22
	Critical Issue 4 – Products & Services	23
5.0	Marketing Plan	24
5.1	Marketing Possibilities	26
6.0	Fund Development Plan	27
6.1	Fund Development Possibilities	28
6.2	Fund Development Plan 2005 – 2007	30
6.3	Grant Tracking 2005	30a
7.0	Implementation Timeline	31
8.0	Financial Projections for 2005 – 2007	32
9.0	Board of Directors and Advisory Board	
	Board of Directors Job Description	33
	Board Member Contract	34
	Advisory Board Resolution	36
10.0	Staffing Plan and Job Descriptions	37
	...	
	Executive Director	38
11.0	Evaluation Plan	40
12.0	Appendix	
A	Board Composition Matrix	42
B	Working With Boards	43
C	Press Releases	44

7 Steps to Stronger, More Sustainable Fundraising

1. Focus on Your Mission in Times of Crisis & Change

Every decision, communication and move should be based on what will serve your mission best. Clarify and communicate to your supporters just what you do, what is at risk and why you need to continue. For many organizations, it takes a crisis to figure this out. Do it now, before you hit deficits or program cancellations.

2. Invest in Stewardship...from the Beginning

Stewardship = Communication. Stewardship is your best use of time and resources. It ensures that donors know how much you appreciate their gifts and allows them to learn how you have used their generosity. It is also an institutional investment of time, energy and heart to ensure donor investment for the long-term. No one can afford to live without a strong stewardship program.

Stewardship in times of change and crisis is especially important. Your donors' current need is to feel a sense of control over their immediate world. You can help meet that need by letting them know how their actions have made this a better place to live. Tell your story and let them know why they are heroes.

3. Consider Your *Case Statement* a Call to Action

"Entitlement is over" was the rallying cry at the recent 2001 Association of Fundraising Professionals' Pacific Northwest Symposium in Victoria, Canada. As Norm Stowe of the Pace Group in Vancouver, B.C. commented: "Organizations who cannot define their relevance and impact in the world around them will follow the example of many larger corporations and slowly go out of business. If you can't stay relevant and responsive to changing needs, you don't deserve the support of the community." Harsh, but accurate.

Every nonprofit organization needs a current "Philanthropic Case for Support" that defines the difference philanthropy will make towards its vision - before, during and after a major capital campaign. Keeping donors informed about your purpose and goals, and the need for their involvement should be an annual exercise.

Most importantly, make sure your board participates in defining and internalizing this case statement. In difficult times, the board will be key in communicating the need for investment in your organization.

Two key components of your annual case:

- external relevance - what's going on in the community that you are responding to, and
- targeted, focused fundraising goals. Clarify how a donation will meet the donors' needs to create a stronger community.

4. Build Community within Your Supporters

"There is an amazing and wonderful thing that happens in the darkest times. Right now, most of the people in the United States and many throughout the world are asking themselves the definitive question of all nonprofit work: How can I make a difference?" Your donors need to know they belong to an important, positive cause like yours. Find ways to foster community, honor their individual heroism, clarify the impact they can

collectively achieve, and use their voices to comment on the importance of the work you are doing. Your donors have something at stake in your success. As one donor said recently, "indeed, our chances of being 'heroes' are few and far between in life—it feels good to be needed here."

5. Expand Your Donor Base: Today's Small Gifts = Tomorrow's Major Investments

The more people who support your organization, the greater your future flexibility. Organizations that invest in expanding donor bases now will be well prepared for future economic changes. While a small number of donors may fall prey to economic reversals, a broader donor base will reflect varied economic fortunes. There is strength in numbers; major foundations and corporations often determine their support by the broad base of support an organization commands.

Case Study: Turning Small Donors into Investors

A social service agency received a three-year pledge totaling \$5,000 from a small private foundation. When the agency sent an invoice for the second payment, they included a note that provided details on a youth program the new facility was making possible. The donor requested additional information and eventually made a gift of \$50,000 to support the program's continuation.

6. Continue Your Cycle of Fundraising

Donors tell organizations when they are ready to make gifts. If this is a bad time, they will communicate their reluctance. For many donors, this is the best time to make a gift because they know how important their gift is right now. If you are not talking with donors, telling them how your organization is strengthening the community, you are depriving them of the opportunity to make a difference—something many donors crave.

Simply stated, if you ignore your supporters, they will assume that you have nothing to offer at this crucial time. They are hearing from others who are improving schools, increasing the ability of hospitals to respond to crises, or easing the suffering of society's most unfortunate. Your silence will communicate inactivity and lack of need.

7. Embrace Donor-directed Giving

"The New Physics of Philanthropy," presented at the recent AFP symposium, outlines the change in the philanthropic climate from a "menu of needs" dictated by nonprofits, to "donor-directed giving." Don't fear losing your organization's goals and vision. Your donors want to know you have direction, but they may want to collaborate with you to define magnitude and impact. Talk about what you hope to achieve to meet community needs and listen to your donors' suggestions. This isn't giving up your plans or vision. It will establish invigorating partnerships that ensure your work is relevant to the community. Donors' visions can often be greater than yours - many are willing to make a significant investment if given the chance.

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I-P-O Exercise

You have identified a funding source whose guidelines clearly indicate that they support projects to organizations of high credibility; where a problem is clearly identified and outcome objectives are specified.

Give your work a title; Do a four sentence summary; One sentence identifies applicant; One sentence on credibility; One sentence on problem; One sentence on objective

Introduction	Problem	Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief history • Mission • Programs • Uniqueness of organization • Accomplishments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The problem • Describe the population with the problem • Consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome • Objective(s) • Timeline • Measures / Benchmarks

I-P-O checklist

- Title
- Summary
- Introduction
 - Info on history included
 - Mission Statement given
 - Description of programs
 - Distinguishing characteristics
 - Organization Accomplishments
- Problem
 - Undesirable condition described
 - Undesirable condition quantified
 - Clients described
 - Consequences if not solved
- Objectives
 - Objective linked to problem
 - Objective quantified
 - Indicates change in problem
 - Measure included
 - Does not describe methods / services

Basic Principles of Proposal Writing

1. The proposal should be neat, clean and easy to read
2. Write your proposal in English
3. Resist the urge to use jargon or demonstrate your artistry of “big words”
4. Make it brief
5. Be positive
6. Avoid unsupported assumptions

Annual Philanthropic Case for Support Outline: Building a Case from an Inventor’s Point of View

Now more than ever, donors are looking for solid, outcomes-based information regarding the impact of their gifts. Our firm has found that donors considering major gifts are similar to investors considering significant investment opportunities: they want to know what the return on investment - or in the donors' cases, the community benefit - will be before determining their level of investment. Decisions are more objective, and less intuitive.

The strongest and most compelling cases for support provide vital information on the organization's (or program's) community benefits and relevance from the donor's perspective. Remember, information is power. From the donor's point of view: "The more information and detail you give me, the more I trust that you have carefully considered how you will use my gift."

Building an annual case is not the same as writing your annual appeal letter or brochure. This is an annual exercise to remind your organization (and, in turn, the community) why you exist, what is most relevant about your programs or services to the community and what your organization could achieve with increased funding. Every annual philanthropic case should include a "stretch" vision to encourage your donors to increase their investments and relationships with your organization.

As an annual exercise, review and answer the following questions, and incorporate the answers throughout your development and marketing program.

Annual Philanthropic Case for Support Outline

What is your relevance?

- Community context: what is the bigger picture outside of your organization? What is going on locally, regionally, nationally or internationally that sets the tone and context for your work? Why is the community's support important now - at this place in time?
- What societal/environmental/health/etc. issues are you directly addressing?
- How does your work directly affect the donor? What about the donor's life will be different because of the work you do or the programs and services that you provide?

How do you do what you do, and why are you the right organization to support?

- Why is yours the best organization to handle these issues? What differentiates your organization from other similar ones?
- What is your approach and why is it effective?
- What are your past and present accomplishments? What role(s) do you play in the community? (Use third-party validation - such as testimonials - as much as possible.)
- How does your organization's leadership in the community enable you to do this work?

How are you financially supported?

- Explain how you are funded (including the sources of revenues) and the impact of philanthropy on your ability to serve the community. Don't assume the donor understands your financial needs.
- How has your past success led to your current needs? How have your past accomplishments positioned you to take on new challenges, or needs or problems?
- What will increased financial support allow you to do? (This is important - you want donors to think about making "stretch" gifts.)

What are your top initiatives or goals for this year?

- What community needs are you facing *this* year? What are you going to do this year that's different, expanded, or new? How will these activities or efforts respond to the community needs?
- How did you determine these needs and the appropriate solutions?

Community Benefit: Definition of Success

- What is your vision? Remind donors of where you are heading.
- How will your organization or specific programs make a difference in the lives of donors (directly or indirectly)?
- Include a success story that makes your case personal, or focus on a cross-section of the community whose needs are new, and whom the annual appeal would help directly.

Call to Action: Why do you need the donor's support?

- Why should the donors support you? What will their gifts enable you to do that you can't presently accomplish? Sometimes organizations tell such a solid story, the donors walk away very, very glad that the nonprofits are so successful and don't need their support. Don't forget to wrap up your great case with a solid, bold and confident case for why you need increased support.

Wrap-up: Final Pizzazz: Why should your organization be at the top of your donor's list?

- Connect your vision with the donors. In making a significant gift, donors evaluate your project in three ways:
 1. *Intellect*: Is this a solid investment? Is this organization well-organized, and well-run, with solid programs and needs? Would I be proud to be associated with this organization?
 2. *Gut*: What about this organization or program just feels right to me - makes me feel that a gift to this organization should go to the top of my list of personal philanthropic priorities?
 3. *Heart*: What are the organization's stories or successes that touch me, excite me, motivate me and pull me in personally?

The Handwriting on the Wall

Change Happens

They Keep Moving the Cheese

Anticipate Change

Get Ready for the Cheese to Move

Monitor Change

Smell the Cheese Often
So You Know When It is Getting Old

Adapt to Change Quickly

The Quicker You Let Go of Old Cheese,
The Sooner You Can Enjoy New Cheese

Change

Move With the Cheese

Enjoy Change!

Savor the Adventure
And the Taste of New Cheese!

Be Ready to Quickly

Change Again and Again

They Keep Moving the Cheese

Johnson M.D., Spencer: *Who Moved My Cheese? An Amazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work & in Your Life*, © 1998