Building a Sustainable Mentoring Program

A Framework for Resource Development Planning

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Preface

While many mentoring programs succeed in building services that meet the needs of their clients and the larger community, they often lack the knowledge, skills, time, and internal systems it takes to sustain their program over the long term. This guide provides a framework that mentoring programs can use to build the resources and capacity needed to continue services after the U. S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) grants end. It offers key steps for developing and implementing a comprehensive resource development plan.

Sustainability is a complex issue involving many aspects of an organization's overall management and operations: planning, finance, fundraising, human resource, programming, partnership building, and board development. Setting aside time to develop a strategic plan for the long range health of your program is therefore an essential part of the work of executive directors, board of directors, and others in leaderships roles in your organization. The framework presented in this guide can be helpful regardless of the size and structure of your mentoring program, and even a small program with few staff can implement many of the planning activities provided here.

Because there are few short cuts to building a lasting program, the process of developing and implementing a sustainability plan should begin as early as possible in the grant cycle. By implementing an effective plan to assure that your mentoring program will continue, you can maintain this important community service and avoid the negative impacts associated with having to prematurely close matches or reduce services. Mentoring research consistently points to match duration as one of the cornerstone indicators of successful mentoring outcomes.[1] Your efforts to build a sustainable program will also benefit those young people waiting for services, the many volunteers who are invested in your program's mission, the school programs that look to your program for support, and the community that your program serves.

Mentoring programs that have developed a strong foundation in their schools and communities can be powerful resources to help young people be successful. The grant funds received from OSDFS have provided significant seed money to establish school-based mentoring in every state in the country. Programs receiving these funds have an opportunity—and an obligation—to take steps to ensure that their services will last far beyond the three-year funding cycle and will become a stable resource for youth in their communities. Building lasting programs that are supported by the communities in which services are provided is an important outcome of this federal initiative.

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[1] In their study on the effects of match duration, researchers Jean Grossman and Jean Rhodes found a strong connection between the length of matches and their overall positive outcomes. They also found that matches ending early actually caused drops in self-worth and perceived scholastic confidence of mentees. (Grossman and Rhodes, 2002).

Who Will Benefit From This Guide

Program managers, development directors, and other management staff will find this guide helpful in charting a course for sustainability. Board members, who have primary responsibility for the fiscal and programmatic health of the organization, should also find this guide useful. Although targeted to OSDFS grantees, the advice in this guide is general enough to be helpful to other youth mentoring efforts.

The four sections in this guide offer a systematic approach to developing sustainable resources for mentoring programs, from understanding key principles of sustainability to describing specific funding sources that will meet your program's needs.

- Section 1 offers an overview of key definitions and guiding principles that will be useful as you move through the planning process.

- Section 2 covers how to prepare to launch a resource development planning process, including what you will need to get started, how to stay organized, and how to assess the internal and external factors that impact sustainability.

- Section 3 offers a step-by-step process to help your agency craft a realistic resource development plan, with tools and tips on everything from how to identify your priorities to creating a timeline for your fundraising plan.

- Section 4 provides an overview of the five major types of funding generally available to mentoring programs, describing how to find them and listing the pros and cons of each.

- The Appendices support these sections with readings, tools, and lists of web and print resources.

Getting the most out of this guide

If your program has not yet begun to develop a comprehensive plan for sustaining your program after the end of your ED mentoring grant, we recommend that you use the guide to get going. Share the book with staff, board, and others interested in the success of your program, and use or adapt the tools to meet your needs. If time is limited, review the tips at the end of Section 4 to help you move forward, and adapt the process to make sense for your particular situation.

If you have already started a planning process, use this guide to provide new insights or ideas, to educate others in your program who need to get on board with your planning, or to help you if you get stuck. Tools like the article on board involvement in Appendix A or the Sustainability Checklist in Appendix B may be of particular interest. Use the resources in Appendix C to help you get the specific information you need to fully develop your plan.

However you choose to use the contents of this guide, we hope that it will help you develop a stable and sustainable program that will allow young people in your community to thrive through the support and friendship of a caring mentor.

Sustainability: Guiding Principles and Challenges

- What *Is* Sustainability?

- Guiding Principles for Successful Resource Development

- Challenges of Resource Development for ED Mentoring Programs

    ‣ Challenges of fund raising within a school-based setting

    ‣ Challenges of new, unproven programs

What *Is* Sustainability?

Sustainability, capacity building, resource development, fundraising—these are terms that often are used interchangeably to describe the work that nonprofit organizations do to survive and thrive. To begin our discussion of sustainability it will be helpful to briefly define these terms and shed some light on how each is related to the other.

Sustainability in the context of the nonprofit refers to the overall stability of the organization: its ability to weather temporary challenges, provide quality services in the present, and maintain a solid foundation for its future. Sustainability is impacted by all the key activities and functions of an organization and all major activities are, in turn, affected by the ability of an organization to sustain itself.

Capacity-building is the process by which an organization strengthens its foundations in order to increase its ability to carry out its mission. Organizations can build capacity by strengthening boards, building technological resources, engaging volunteers, raising funds, building partnerships, and developing staff skills and knowledge. Agencies with strong organizational capacity are more likely to be sustainable.

Resource development planning is the intentional process of setting short- and long-range goals for obtaining the financial resources needed to support the organization. By planning a set of activities to reach a stated goal, agencies and programs can avoid last-minute fiscal crises and haphazard responses to every new fundraising idea that comes along. The resource development plan offers a road map to fiscal stability.

Fundraising gets down to the nuts and bolts of obtaining financial support to carry out the activities of a program or organization. It is one piece of capacity building—albeit a very

important one—and is usually most successful when the agency has a well-developed organizational capacity. As an example, a fundraising event that relies on a large donor list will be most successful when the agency has a strong, active board, extensive community connections, and resources sufficient to contact donors.

This book focuses on the process of **developing resources** for lasting programming, because without these resources the mentoring program will be unable to grow and thrive. It provides an introduction to how your program can build resources and capacity to continue services beyond your Department of Education grant. One key to doing this successfully is to see the connections between resource development and sustainability. Resource development uses fundraising strategies to build agency capacity, which helps strengthen sustainability. Sustainable organizations, in turn, can carry out their mission and develop more resources to maintain, enhance, and expand services.

Programs and organizations that understand this symbiotic relationship see every fundraising activity as having multiple purposes, all of which can affect and enhance long-range sustainability. As you work through the advice and tools in this guide, you are likely to see ways in which your own program can raise funds, attract volunteers, expand partnerships, and build overall capacity, all at the same time.

Guiding Principles for Successful Resource Development

Resource development is an ongoing task that can take many forms, from a straightforward fund-raising event that helps support a group mentoring activity to a long-range search for foundation grants. Even though federal funds provide primary support to your mentoring program, programmatic and administrative costs require additional resources, and as the end of that funding cycle looms the need to obtain alternative funding becomes critical. In short, resource development is a function that all ED mentoring programs must carry out.

That said, resource development is often the last thing on the minds of mentoring staff members as they begin the important work of establishing an effective program. The priority is, and certainly should be, providing the services and carrying out the mission of the mentoring program. Often, the task of sustaining the program is not clearly defined, and no one is charged with ownership for this important work. When the need for additional funding arises, programs may be left scrambling without a clear plan, leadership, administrative capacity, or resources to do the job effectively.

The good news is that it's possible to take a deep breath and begin to gain control of your resource development needs. Specific tools for effective resource development planning will be covered later in this guide, but first let's take a look at some key principles that will help you get started. In the long run, these principles will not only make the process of developing funds more effective, but will also help lay the foundations for long-range sustainability.

Principle 1. Create passion for what you are doing.

There is no substitute for passion when it comes to resource development. As Mentoring Resource Center trainer Craig Bowman says:

> Passion fuels our work. It gives us hope. It fires our imaginations. Passion gives us the courage to do, to give, and to share. . . . [T]he resources you need will come when you are in the business of raising the passions of the people connected to your work.
>
> — Craig Bowman, Individual Giving, in *Sustainability Planning and Resource Development for Youth Mentoring Programs*, 2005

You may need to develop the passion-raising within your own organization. How much do your co-workers really know about the good work you are trying to do? If your agency is a large one, do the people in charge understand your program's mission and vision? How about your board of directors and partner agencies? Developing a powerful message about the importance of your mentoring program in order to raise the passion of those who are in a position to support your efforts can lay the groundwork for building a strong resource development plan. And once they are on board, they can, in turn, spread your message to a wider audience.

Principle 2. Understand and support your program's mission/vision/goals.

You and your supporters must know, support, and be able to clearly describe your mentoring program's mission, vision, goals and activities. This is important not only to sell your program to potential donors, but also to help you remain true to that mission as you begin to seek additional funding. Too often, programs "follow the money," modifying their core mission to accommodate a new funding stream or a wealthy donor with a particular programmatic interest. Make your mission drive the development of resources, not the other way around.

Principle 3. Be realistic but maintain a positive attitude.

Know where you are in the continuum of resource development planning and where you want to be, taking into account the strengths and limitations of your agency and the community you serve. Spend time clearly identifying your "current reality" and deal upfront with any significant barriers that may affect your ability to move forward. More on this process is in Section 2.

Principle 4. Develop fundraising goals and objectives that are realistic for the capacity of your agency and the local community.

Each situation is unique and requires different approaches and solutions. Small organizations with limited budgets and staff time make different resource development plans than larger

ones. Similarly, programs in rural areas face vastly different fundraising challenges than those in metropolitan areas.

Principle 5. Get to know your organization and your community inside and out, and engage a team of helpers who can give you the information you need.

If you are part of a larger agency, develop close ties with those staff members who are involved in agency-wide planning, budgeting, resource development, and community relations. If your agency is small, seek additional support from community volunteers and your peers in other agencies. Getting support and buy-in from many people as you develop your plan will make the job of implementing it much easier.

Principle 6. Develop a strong presence in your community as a champion for kids.

The passion that you have for your mentoring program combined with a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges within your community can make you a powerful advocate for youth services. Take the time to serve on youth-related committees and boards, participate in community forums or hearings, write letters to the editor, inform local government officials about your work, and network with other social service organizations. As you build a role for yourself and your program in the community, you will broaden your network of partners and supporters and are more likely to find opportunities for developing new resources to support your activities.

Principle 7. Actively seek and obtain the support and involvement of your board of directors and agency leaders.

Resource development should be one of the key responsibilities of your organization's board of directors and executive leaders. If your agency's management team and board are fully behind your program, you are well on your way to long-term sustainability. However, mentoring programs that have been added to an existing organization may face difficulties gaining a commitment from their boards and CEOs to seek permanent funding solutions for these new initiatives. This is especially true when the mentoring program is one of many operated by the organization, requiring the board and CEO to prioritize their resource development efforts and how new resources are allocated among various programs. Be persistent and find many ways to remind these important people that your mentoring program is good for the community as a whole and therefore good for your organization. (See Appendix A for tips on building board commitment to sustainability.)

Principle 8. Diversify to build capacity.

The golden rule of resource development says that no more than 30 percent of your funding should come from any single type of resource: that is, public funding, private or corporate foundations, business support, fundraising events or entrepreneurial ventures, and individual giving. This is a goal to work toward, but don't expect to get there in the first year or two. Use the strengths of your agency and supporters to determine which new types of funding

sources will most likely work for you. Set long-range goals that guide your organization toward a more diversified funding mix, and lay the groundwork for these new efforts while federal funding is still in place. (More about this in Section 3.)

Challenges of Resource Development for OSDFS Mentoring Programs

Starting a new program or significantly adding to an existing one takes time and energy that, at least initially, leaves little room for tasks beyond day-to-day program development and management. When the start-up is fueled by a new federal grant with many contractual and reporting requirements and complicated by multiple partners who need to be brought on board, the idea of adding long-range resource development planning to the list of tasks may feel virtually impossible.

Careful planning and a positive attitude can go a long way toward making resource development more manageable, and the advice and tools in the following sections of this guide will lead you through the steps needed to develop and implement a strong plan. However, OSDFS mentoring programs face special challenges that should be considered up front in order to anticipate the possible impact they will have on your resource development strategies. These challenges, and possible solutions to them, include:

Challenges of fundraising within a school-based setting

Of the more than 250 OSDFS mentoring programs established in 2004 and 2005, more than 80 are administered by a school, school district, or other local education agency. Others are operated by community- or faith-based organizations that have either financial or non-financial agreements with public educational institutions. How does the school connection affect resource development planning and sustainability for your mentoring program? Consider these potential barriers:

■ Funding for public education is a national concern that in some parts of the country has reached a crisis level. With sports and arts programs being cut and other priorities surfacing, it may be hard to make a case for direct funding from your school or district to support your mentoring program.

■ These cuts in programs have resulted in a burgeoning of fundraisers for specific activities—candy sales for sports teams or debate teams, for example, which may make it more difficult for your mentoring program to implement similar activities.

■ School districts often have rules and restrictions on raising funds for individual programs. They may require that all funds raised are distributed among all their programs rather than being dedicated to one, or they may not have a structure for accepting resources raised through fundraising activities.

- Educational entities are sometimes ineligible to apply for certain government grants and many private foundations.

- School boards, especially for larger districts, tend to focus on big-picture issues and long-range planning for the entire educational system, so they are not likely to be active participants in resource development for a specific program, especially one that is outside the basic academic program.

Possible solutions

- **Be prepared and informed**. Whether your program is operated directly by the school or not, become familiar with the district's funding streams, budget processes, and priorities. Find out if your school or district has written policies, rules, or general guidelines for fundraising. Know who the key decisionmakers are and the limits of your own authority to make decisions about developing resources.

- **Focus on cooperation and collaboration**. Develop marketing materials that speak to the school district's stated vision and show how your mentoring program can help (be sure all marketing tools go through your district's approval process). Be aware of local school fundraising activities and who is in charge of them. See if you can turn the potential competition into collaboration by agreeing to help each other out.

- **Maximize relationships**. Get to know the grant writer for your school or district and work with this person to see how your program might be incorporated into other grants. For example, a multi-million dollar after-school grant may be able to include support for some of your volunteer functions or provide activities for your matches. Keep your local principal, PTA chair, and others informed about your program and any plans you are considering for resource development. Your program needs the support of these and other decisionmakers in order to survive.

- **Don't let your school board off the hook**. Take a group of mentors and mentees to a school board meeting to make a presentation. Get to know the interests of the board members and see if you can find a strong ally for your work. Be sure they are all on your mailing list and invite them to all of your functions.

- **Develop a strong advisory board**. An active advisory board with members who are willing to get involved in resource development can be just as effective as a board of directors. If your advisory board lacks members who could take on this role, build up your membership to include people with this interest and consider setting up a special fundraising subcommittee.

- **Use partners to sponsor fundraising activities**. If your mentoring program is funded through a public education agency but also has nonprofit partners, see if your partners will sponsor some of your fundraising activities. This could be a win-win situation for your mentoring program and partner agencies, as they will receive name recognition on publicity for the event, and likely take a small percentage of any profits for their time, while your program can receive funding without having to go through the district's fiscal bureaucracy.

Challenges of new, unproven programs

Raising stable funding is usually easier for a program with a proven track record. Yet many OSDFS mentoring programs are new and therefore relatively unproven in developing effective approaches for helping students achieve academic and other school-related goals. Even established programs may not have experience with school-based mentoring. Whether a new program or merely new to school-based mentoring, any or all of the following challenges may apply to you:

■ Your program may still be dealing with the basics of establishing effective systems, developing mentor training and policy manuals, and even hiring or replacing staff. Even thinking about program sustainability at this point seems overwhelming, and it is likely that no one has this job on their list of responsibilities.

■ Partnerships established by the OSDFS grant for the purpose of implementing the new program need to be solidified and roles and responsibilities clarified. This work is vital to developing a stable—and marketable—program.

■ Although matches are up and running, actual numbers may still be low and outcome data limited, and academic outcomes are not likely to emerge until the matches are well established.

■ Being the new kid on the block can be potentially difficult as you begin to compete for the scarce resources available in your community. Other after-school programs in your district, some of which may have been operating for years, are much better positioned than you are to obtain local grants or stage large fundraising events.

Possible solutions

Build sustainability planning into everything you do. Focusing on program implementation is exactly where you need to be in the first year or two, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be thinking about the long-term stability of your program. As you read through this guide, think about simple ways you can incorporate activities that support resource development into day-to-day operations. Here are a few ideas:

■ Talk about sustainability at every advisory board meeting, every board of directors meeting, and every time you meet with your supervisor. Come up with a couple of clearly defined goals for the coming year or two, write them down, and get these important players to buy into them.

■ When attending community meetings to recruit volunteers, take advantage of this opportunity to hear about potential funding or current community issues and to get to know community leaders who may be helpful in the future. Keep a file of these for future reference and set aside time each week to make appointments with these important allies.

■ At each staff meeting, include time for success stories or other ideas for marketing your program. Take advantage of your staff's creative suggestions.

- Track your achievements and use them in all of your public relations and marketing materials. View your successes not only in terms of the help you bring to clients, but also as visible expressions of the impact mentoring can have on the community.

- Be sure that your program evaluation plan will yield information that can be used to promote your program. For example, positive comments this year from a parent or student satisfaction survey can be used next year in a grant proposal or in a pitch to a local business or corporation as evidence your program is working.

- Use existing research and findings on mentoring to prove the relevance of your program in your particular community. Show how your program follows best practice guidelines for mentoring that are based on research.

You can also overcome the "new program" challenges by staying focused on your program's strengths, honoring your current supporters whenever possible, and maximizing partnerships. Specifically:

- Keep focused on the basics of building the program your OSDFS grant is funding and making it as successful as possible. Don't get distracted by new program ideas. If you have leftover energy, use it to develop new resources to support your existing program in the years to come, rather than trying to start another new program. Be proud of the work you are doing and keep it simple until you know you have reached some of your program goals.

- Keep track of resources you already have, both financial and non-financial. Look at your wealth, not your deficits, and find ways to highlight these to your supporters and potential supporters. Your program's volunteers, temporary interns, nonfinancial partners, the business down the street that gives you coupons—these all represent your potential for sustainability. Recognize these loyal supporters in many ways and whenever possible.

- Nurture and build upon existing partnerships. Focus on mutual benefits to help bring less engaged partners along. If roles and responsibilities are unclear, hold a special meeting that is dedicated to ironing out these issues, and consider bringing in a consultant if problems persist.

- Recognize that resource development is competitive, but doesn't have to be divisive. Other programs in your community are likely to seek funding from the same sources that your organization will. These same programs may be your partners—they may refer clients to you or have services your clients need. It is possible, even vital, to build these positive relationships even though you may be in competition for future funding. Identify ways in which your agency or program is unique from those with whom you are in competition, rather than trying to "out do" them. There are plenty of ways to avoid competition—but only if the communication channels are open.

SECTION 2

Preparing for Resource Development Planning

- Getting Organized
  - ▸ Identify Leadership
  - ▸ Identify and Allocate Resources to Support the Planning Effort
  - ▸ Recruit and Establish a Planning Team

- Assessing Your Current Situation
  - ▸ Conduct an Internal Assessment
  - ▸ Conduct an External Assessment
  - ▸ Summarize, Interpret, and Present Findings

Now that we've looked at guiding principles for sustainability and examined potential challenges and possible solutions that OSDFS mentoring programs face, it's time to get down to the specifics of how to develop and implement a resource development plan that will work for your organization. This process includes three primary stages: preparation, developing the plan, and implementation. In this section, we will cover how to prepare for your planning process—doing the important background work and establishing an infra-structure to support your resource develop-ment effort. Section 3 offers a detailed guide to developing and implementing a plan that will work for your organization.

Steps To Prepare for the Planning Process

Getting the ball rolling is often the hardest part of sustainability planning because it requires a lot of time and a high level of persistence, energy, and enthusiasm from you and your staff. Kick-starting any planning process requires a cheerleader who can build the com-mitment of key players for the long haul. This person, or team of people, will initially drive and facilitate the process, but as the plan is developed other players will emerge who may eventually take on major responsibilities for planning, implementing, and evaluating the sustainability effort.

It is important to note here that this process isn't necessarily linear and that the plan you develop is, and should be, a living document that requires frequent updates and adjust-ments to remain effective. Your program may already be conducting fundraising activities without having a written resource development plan, or you may have a "bare bones" plan that will need to be revisited and strengthened as you try out new ideas. As you read through this

section, think about where you are in your sustainability planning process—what you have done, what you need to revisit, what has yet to be started. The Sustainability Planning Checklist in Appendix B provides a tool for keeping track of your progress.

The following steps will lay the foundation for developing and implementing a sustainability plan. The first activities are primarily organizational—getting leadership support and developing a basic infrastructure for your planning process. Once this is done, you will assess your current situation, gathering the information that you will need to conduct an informed planning process and recording what you learn. Although they are described here in roughly chronological order, some steps may happen concurrently or at different points in the process. As noted before, each situation is unique, so approach these tasks with some flexibility.

Getting Organized

1. Identify Leadership

The need for a cheerleader to champion your effort was discussed earlier in the context of passion-raising. But the need for leadership goes beyond enthusiasm. Leadership for sustainability planning requires the authority to make decisions, the ability to think strategically, the skills and experience to be effective, and the passion to be visionary. No small role to fill! Fortunately, all these requirements do not have to be contained in a single person, but can be built as you develop a planning team.

That said, someone needs to be the initiator, the jump-starter. This person will have to make a case for the need to develop a sustainability plan, and will need to get top decision makers within the organization and at subcontracting agencies to give approval to move forward. Keep the message simple and to the point, and decide how to keep these people informed throughout the process. Their approval represents their commitment to the process and gives your chosen leader the authority to move forward.

Grow Your Own Experts

Fundraising skills are cumulative. The more fundraising you do, the better you get at it. Write a proposal for funding as early as possible. Even if it doesn't result in funding, you and your team will learn the process. Your next one will be easier. (If you apply but are turned down, ask why—nicely.) If you hire a professional grant writer, watch what she does. Ask questions. Put on a fundraising event long before you "need" to, to find out what to do, what works best, and what not to do.

2. Identify and Allocate Resources To Support the Planning Effort

Planning for sustainability requires resources: time, space, materials and supplies, and money. Many needs can be met through in-kind contributions, such as office space and staff time. But financial resources are also important. You may need to purchase a software program to track your results, buy a subscription to an online foundation search engine, or hire a one-time consultant to help you develop your plan. Be sure that your decisionmakers know

that you will need to allocate some financial resources to the effort, and ask for their help in identifying an appropriate source.

A word of caution is appropriate here regarding allowable costs for resource development activities. As you begin to identify resource needs and sources, be sure that the costs are allowable under the current funding stream, and check with your OSDFS program officer if you are uncertain about allowable costs. In general, fundraising activities are not allowed under OSDFS mentoring funding regulations. This is especially important as you draw on staff time, whose salaries may be entirely supported through OSDFS funds for the purpose of providing mentoring services. Some organizations find ways to support resource development activities by taking advantage of in-kind support, volunteer experts, or other staff within the organization who can be freed up to participate in resource development activities.

3. Recruit and Establish a Planning Team

There are no hard and fast rules for who should be involved in resource development planning, but some important considerations should be kept in mind when building your team so that you end up with a dynamic, compatible, and effective group. These include:

- **Leadership and decision making**. Although your effort has identified a leader to head up the charge, no one person has the credibility, expertise, or skills to single-handedly lead a substantive planning or change initiative. Your team should include people who have enough power to make initial decisions and who are willing to share many of the leadership tasks.

- **Skills and competencies**. Tap the existing skills and abilities of your staff to find people who can provide specific skills needed to help in the planning process. Look for helpers who have:

    – previous planning or fundraising experience

    – strong organizational, communication, and research skills

    – creativity

    – knowledge of budgeting and basic financial skills

    – experience working on a team.

"My program doesn't have extra funds for sustainability planning."

You're not alone, but you have options. Here are a few:

- Ask your board of directors for a one-time contribution to support your planning effort.

- Hold a special—but simple—fundraiser such as a raffle to raise what you need.

- Search for a small grant from a foundation that supports one-time funding of capacity-building efforts. (Try the Grantsmanship Center at http://www.tgci.com or another foundation search engine for ideas.)

- Borrow staff from other departments in your agency or ask your partners for help.

- Get software or supplies donated.

- Recruit volunteers with experience in planning and resource development. (Look to your local volunteer centers for help.)

If your staff is very small, reach out to volunteers or loaned staff from other agencies to join your effort. If you need advice on a specific topic as your planning moves ahead, consider inviting an expert to one of your meetings to coach you. You'll also need someone who is good at organizing and tracking information who is willing to be the group record keeper.

■ **Passion and enthusiasm**. No set of skills can compensate for a lack of these two important ingredients to your process. Look for people who share your passion for mentoring and who understand the need for your services in the community. You don't want to be the only cheerleader on the team!

■ **Representation from other organizations.** Decide who needs to be at the table to represent the interests of key players outside your agency. For example, if your program is administered by your nonprofit organization but operates in a school and staffing is shared, invite a representative from the school to serve on the team. The involvement of significant partners in the planning phase helps ensure buy-in down the road. Remind these helpers that their involvement gives them both a voice in the planning and an opportunity to develop resources that their organization will also benefit from down the road.

It's likely that your team will begin with just a few key players, but as you move through the process you are likely to pick up additional members who can provide valuable assistance. Try to have a solid core that doesn't change a lot, however, since you want the group to be cohesive and fully engaged in the process.

Before jumping into your planning, come to agreement about the team's mission and scope of work, and set some initial timeframes for completion. Be sure that your team members understand and agree to the time commitment required. You'll also want to develop some general operating ground rules (see sidebar) that will help you maintain order. Don't let your primary goal of developing a sustainability plan get lost in lengthy conversation about operational details, but spend enough time getting to know each other and coming to agreement on these basics to make the team work well together. Once this is done, you're ready to move forward.

Assessing Your Current Situation

The next steps in your sustainability planning process involve gathering and recording information about your current situation. Because sustainability is an integral part of all that you do, a good planning process will include assessing your own program and agency strengths and challenges, those of your formal and informal partners, and the broader community in which your services are provided. In a nutshell, you can't know where you are going until you know where you are.

This assessment process will help you and your team:

■ Understand the strengths and limitations of your agency so that you can develop a tailored, realistic plan for resource development

■ Learn how your mentoring program currently interacts with partners, and how these partners add value to your long-term stability

■ Identify other community organizations with which you could develop a relationship that could increase your program's sustainability

■ Understand the broader needs of the community and how your services meet those needs—a vital factor when seeking funding

Because each organization and each community is different, it's important to tailor your internal and external assessment to your own unique situation. The suggestions and tools in this section provide a framework for your work, but only you can decide what areas are most important to focus on. As you move forward, you will gather considerable information that will help you later on when you develop your long-range plan, so be sure that you have a good system for keeping track of what you learn. The chart at the end of this section summarizes the kinds of information to gather during these assessment processes. (Also see Appendix B for several tools you can use to organize your information.)

1. Conduct an Internal Assessment

The first stage of your assessment will look at your internal strengths, challenges, and opportunities. If areas of significant concern emerge, such as a lack of commitment to the project by top-level administration, you will likely need to work on these before launching a fundraising effort. Similarly, areas of strength that emerge, such as a committed working board of directors, can help drive implementation of your plan.

What and how much should you review? Think about the aspects of your organization that may affect your ability to develop sustainable resources, and what you will need to know to make your case to a potential funding source. These will range from being sure the mission of your organization is clear and relevant to the work you do, to understanding the process used to allocate resources and what your overhead costs are. "Conducting an Internal Assessment" on the following page provides some guidance on what should be reviewed.

Conducting an Internal Assessment

These questions can help guide your assessment of your program at this time. By understanding your current strengths and challenges, knowing what is in place and what needs work, you will have a better sense of your agency's readiness for sustainability planning. You can adapt this list to include additional questions of your own or limit your focus on several key issues.

1. What is your agency's mission and vision?

2. What are the primary goals and objectives of your mentoring program (from your grant or other document)?

3. Who are the youth you serve and why?

4. What are your outcomes to date? Use your most recent evaluation or program data, as well as anecdotal success stories.

5. What do you do best? What do you need to improve?

6. What is your total budget? What resources do you have, including both financial and in-kind?

7. When will your primary funding sources end?

8. How is your organization structured and administered? Who's in charge?

9. What is staff capacity for participating in sustainability activities—skills, hidden talents, job responsibilities, and availability?

10. What are the strengths and limitations of your board of directors and/or advisory board?

11. What else do you need to know about the internal workings of your program?

As you work on this review, gather together documents that can provide the information you need. Try to gather as many of these as you can and check them off this list:

- ☐ Your Department of Education grant application
- ☐ Agency and program budgets detailing all sources of funding
- ☐ Your most recent annual report
- ☐ Board of directors roster, their skills and connections in the community
- ☐ Policy and procedure manuals
- ☐ Data on program outcomes
- ☐ Your organization's long-range plan, if available

Remember that this process does not have to fall on one person's shoulders. For example, your board of directors should take the lead on doing a self-assessment, and your bookkeeper, fiscal manager, or CFO can provide you with an overview of the budgeting process.

Review the results of your internal assessment. After the team reviews these and any other pieces of useful information about the mentoring program and the organization as a whole, conduct a brainstorming activity with the group. Ask the team the following questions:

■ What strengths stand out as being most useful for developing resources for our program?

■ What challenges did you find that may inhibit the effort?

Use the brainstorming ground rules in Appendix B to create an effective process that allows everyone an opportunity for input. The group can then review this list, refine it, and record the results. This exercise of identifying strengths and challenges should result in an honest assessment of where you are right now. For example, your list may show that you have administrative staff in your organization who are able to provide grant writing or event planning support. But you may also identify a lack of support from your organization's top decision-makers as a challenge. The factors you identify should be considered throughout your planning process—making the most of your agency's strengths and identifying ways to overcome or minimize the challenges.

2. Conduct an External Assessment

At the risk of stating the obvious, mentoring programs exist to serve their communities, but they also rely extensively on them for support. The partnerships and relationships your mentoring program has with the community, the services you provide to them, the visibility, and perceived success or failure of your program are all vital considerations in developing a sustainability plan. So, just as you spent time assessing your internal landscape, you will need to assess the external environment as well.

To make this process manageable, start with looking at your partners, both informal and formal—the groups and individuals who are already involved in your work. Then move to looking at the broader community and the ways in which your program interacts, supports, and is supported by it. For example, what government organizations, community groups, or

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A Word About Budgets and Funding Sources

Understanding your budget and funding sources deserves some special attention. It may be helpful to invite someone from within your agency who really understands the budget and funding outlook to come to a team meeting and give an overview. The budget and the funding streams that support it are so important to your sustainability planning process that you will want to understand it well. For example, you should:

■ Understand current and future funding (known and potential) for the mentoring program

■ Know how the mentoring budget fits into the overall organization's fiscal picture

■ Know how much money will be needed and when to replace funds that are ending

■ Make a grid that shows all funding sources, their start and end dates, and when replacement funds will be needed.

Conducting an External Assessment

Review your partnerships

1. Who are your partners? List every agency or business you can think of that is currently involved with your program, starting with your formal partners and working out from there.

2. What is their mission and how does it resemble your own?

3. What population(s) do they serve?

4. What strengths do they bring to the partnership? Include both agreed-upon benefits and unanticipated ones.

5. What limitations or challenges do they bring? How do these affect your plan for sustainability?

6. How do they benefit from the partnership—what's in it for them?

7. What potential is there for strengthening the partnership for mutual benefit?

Gather and review such information as:

- ☐ Memoranda of understanding, contracts, your grant proposal, and other formal documents that describe your formal relationship with partners
- ☐ Rosters of the boards of directors of your partners
- ☐ Brochures or other marketing materials

Review the broader community where you provide services

1. What are your community's significant unmet human service needs (e.g., lack of housing, school dropout rates)?

2. How does your program help meet community needs?

3. Are other mentoring programs in the area? How do you work with them?

4. What other organizations serve or support the youth and families you work with?

5. Which public agencies serve children and families and what is your relationship with them?

6. Do you have allies in city, county, or state governments who are committed to youth and families and/or mentoring?

7. What local foundations, businesses, or individuals in your community support youth work?

service clubs do you have a relationship with that could be enhanced? Which ones do you know about but have never had a relationship with? Focus on what you already know, and use your staff, board of directors, and partner organizations to help inform your process.

"Conducting an External Assessment" on page 16 outlines what information you might want to gather as you assess your current partnerships and the broader community as it relates to your work.

Assessing partnerships

Your mentoring program probably has both formal and informal partnerships with other organizations in the community. Formal partnerships, a major feature of OSDFS mentoring programs, are usually between schools or other educational agencies and one or more community- or faith-based organizations. These may be financial or nonfinancial agreements to carry out certain parts of the mentoring service, and obligations under the agreement are spelled out in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or financial contract. Your agency may also have informal partners—organizations that support your work and see its value to their own mission. For example, a tobacco prevention program in the schools may refer young people or volunteers to your mentoring program and will seek opportunities to present their information to your mentors and mentees through invitations to events or coming to your mentoring training sessions.

Your current business supporters should also be included in your assessment of partnerships. Their contributions may range from allowing you to place posters on their bulletin boards to making regular financial contributions to your program. Think about how these businesses also receive value from their relationship with your program.

Partnerships benefit your program's sustainability in many ways, including:

- Maximizing resources through the sharing of space, staff, administrative services, or other items—in-kind contributions that can make all the difference

- Shared visibility from media coverage, marketing, and other public information that showcases the partnership

- Opportunities to develop collaborative projects that are attractive to federal, state, and local funding entities

- Enhancing and strengthening your services by filling other unmet needs of your clients and their families

- Cross-training or shared training opportunities for staff and volunteers

- Informal networking among staff and agency leaders

- Providing access to potential volunteers

- Making financial contributions (businesses, foundations, local government, etc.)

Partnerships can also be difficult, time consuming, and even contentious, especially when contractual obligations are unclear. Be honest about any issues you are having with partners and develop plans to resolve these as part of your sustainability planning process.

Assessing the Broader Community

The final step of your review process will focus on the larger community that your program serves. This work will be ongoing as you implement strategies for resource development , but during this planning phase your team needs basic information about the community's needs, assets, resources, and long-range goals. Also helpful will be a look at potential stakeholders who share your mission and interests but are not currently connected to your program.

This process helps you identify how the larger community fits into your overall mission and to what extent you are connected to the community. Don't try to be comprehensive, but rather identify those issues, organizations, and resources that most closely relate to your work and your population. The result of this part of the process can reveal many opportunities for future partnering and possible sources of new funding for your services.

3. Summarize, Interpret, and Present Findings

As you go through each of these three assessments—of internal factors, of partner agencies, and of the broader community—you'll generate a lot of information that needs to be put into some kind of order. Use these tips to help keep this information in order:

■ Have your team record-keeper maintain a master notebook with tabs for each major component of your process so that you can stay organized. Or come up with an electronic file system that allows all team members to review documents in shared files.

■ Summarize the information you have gathered from the internal and external reviews so that important findings are easy to see. Two sample tools for doing this are provided in Appendix B: "Assessing Your Assets: People and Organizations," and "Assessing Your Current Situation: Summary of Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities."

■ Once you have conducted all three reviews and written up your results, have the team identify any emerging themes or patterns, problem areas, or areas of special strength.

Organizing your information and key findings will help as you begin to craft your resource development plan. A clear, concise summary will also be needed to inform your agency board, advisory committees, other staff in the agency, and others who need to be involved.

Present your assessment to your board of directors, top agency or school administrators, and other staff to get feedback and any needed approval to move ahead. Come up with a couple of significant points that can be presented along with the data to help guide the presentation. Keep your presentation brief, using handouts for the full picture if you have time; be clear about where you are in the process; and let them know what kind of input you'd like from them. Since every situation is different, you will have to decide who to inform and whether some decisions need to be made at top management or board levels before proceeding.

Your board and agency management will need to be involved all along the way as you develop the sustainability plan, since you are really making decisions that will have an impact on the overall direction of the organization. Nothing is more frustrating to the process than having a board of directors reject your plan because it hasn't been involved in creating it. Board members can leave the details up to you, but they need to be on the team as you set priorities, goals, and objectives.

Congratulations! The hard task of assessing where you are and the environment in which you provide services has been done, and your team members are now experts in understanding your current reality. You and your other key players are now ready to begin developing a resource development plan that will work best for your situation.

Internal and External Review
Summary of Information Gathered

Internal Factors	Partner Agencies	Local/Regional/ National Issues
Clarity of program/ agency mission, vision, goals	Identify your partners (formal and informal)	Review local or state community needs assessments, benchmarks
Clearly identified population being served	Partner responsibilities to mentoring program	Identify how your program meets community needs
Level of board commitment, assets of board members	Level of partner engagement and commitment	Identify other programs serving your populations
Organizational or administrative factors affecting sustainability	Strengths/challenges of partnerships that affect sustainability	Other mentoring programs in area: competition or cooperation?
Relationship of mentoring program to larger organization	Connections between your staff/board and those of partner agencies	Other community groups/businesses/ individuals who care about youth and families
Current funding and in-kind resources	Common vision/interests (potential for shared fundraising)	Understand local, state, and federal agencies serving children and families
Staff skills, capacity, availability for resource development assignments	Partner's position in community (e.g., image, connections)	City, county, state government officials who are committed to youth services
Program successes and challenges	Partnership successes and challenges	Identify foundations, businesses, individuals who give to children's issues

Creating a Lasting Plan

- Know your primary reason for developing resources

- Develop and clarify your priorities for assuring a sustainabile program

- Review and understand primary resource development options

- Develop goals and measurable objectives based on your assessment and identified priorities

- Develop activities with realistic timelines, and assign roles for accountability

- Develop a final document

- Implement the action plan

- Monitor, review, and celebrate your progress

The resource development plan that you craft will provide your program with short- and long-term goals, objectives, and activities that reflect your agency's situation, strengths, limitations, and needs. This document will become a road map for your program's progress toward sustainability. Just as you make detours when following a road map, the plan you create is likely to need modifications as you begin to implement it. Having clear goals and knowing when you have reached them will help keep the plan on track even when changes in direction need to occur.

Your unique situation will dictate the specifics: who needs to be involved, approval steps, the overall scope of your plan, the time frame for completion, and how the plan will be implemented.

Steps for Creating a Lasting Plan

Step 1. Know your primary reason for developing resources

This may seem obvious, but there are three primary reasons that agencies launch a resource development drive:

- To maintain current service levels

- To grow current service levels to provide more services within your current scope

- To expand the scope of services, take on new challenges, or enter a new market area

If your team has done its work, the results of your internal and external assessments will help you determine which of these three reasons is motivating the sustainability drive. Here are some examples:

Maintaining service levels. If your program is relatively new, has limited visibility, and is relying on one or two primary funding sources, you will

most likely choose to develop a plan that allows you to maintain and stabilize current services before launching any new efforts. For most OSDFS mentoring programs, this is likely the situation. The OSDFS funding provides a stable base of support, but only for a short period of time, and therefore the main objective for launching a resource development plan will be to replace those funds with a more diverse set of resources.

Growing current service levels. Your OSDFS mentoring program may already be developing a stable support base to allow current efforts to continue after federal funding ends. In this case, you may be able to launch a drive to add capacity to the work you are already doing.

Expanding the scope of services. If you have identified a community need for a new kind of service, such as a community-based mentoring program for a specific population, and your existing program is stable, program expansion may be appropriate.

Each of these directions requires considerable planning and effort, so avoid trying to set goals for all three. Be sure that if you plan to grow or expand your program, you are not risking the stability of current services. Your board of directors and top administrative officers should be fully involved in deciding which direction to take.

Step 2: Develop and clarify your priorities for ensuring a sustainable program

It's important to remember that sustainability is not just about raising money, though that is certainly a significant part of every sustainability plan. For example, a program with an excellent fundraising committee that can stage successful money-making events may ultimately fail if the program lacks administrative capacity, has poor program outcomes, or is not visible in the larger community.

If your ultimate goal is to develop resources that will last, be sure to look at the internal and external information you gathered earlier and identify some priorities for your sustainability planning. For some programs, these priorities will fall into place almost naturally, while others will be more difficult to pinpoint. Priorities may fall into several categories, including:

■ Organizational priorities, such as developing clear roles and responsibilities for resource development, or creating a better fiscal review process.

■ Programmatic priorities, such as improving the overall quality of mentoring services in order to improve program outcomes, thus improving chances for obtaining financial support.

■ Funding priorities, such as developing a more diverse funding base or filling an immediate financial need before looking for long-range support.

■ Public relations priorities, such as developing visibility in the community in order to launch a new fundraising initiative.

Have your planning team think about the strengths and challenges that were identified in your information-gathering phase. Ask yourselves questions such as:

■ What needs to be in place internally for us to be a strong, stable, and sustainable program?

■ What work do we need to do in the community to support our goal of sustainability?

■ What should be the emphasis of our fundraising plan—to diversify over time or to fill an immediate financial need?

■ What should be our highest priority as we develop a specific plan of action? What is the second highest priority?

Establishing priorities will help immensely as you develop specific goals, objectives, and activities for your resource development plan. For example, if your assessment has clearly identified that you lack community visibility, then public relations should be a significant priority for your effort, and at least one of your goals should relate to improving in this area.

Step 3:	Review and understand primary resource development options

Before you begin to talk about specific goals, objectives, and activities, be sure that you and your team have a basic understanding of the primary types of funding sources and which are most likely to be appropriate for your own situation. If you're lucky, you already have someone with development experience on your team, or at least as an advisor. This might be a grant writer, events planner, corporate gifts manager, or simply a staff person with background in fund development. If your team lacks this expertise, it's time to get it.

Section 4 provides an overview of each of the primary sources of funding:
■ Government Grants
■ Private Foundations
■ Corporate Giving
■ Individual Giving
■ Events and Local Support

You don't have to be expert in these areas, but it's important to know the pros and cons of each, how likely they are to generate the kind of income you require, the amount of staff time, up-front resources, and organizational capacity needed to be successful, and other considerations. As you work through the next steps and begin to generate ideas, keep referring back to these and other materials so that the goals and objectives you generate are within your organizational capacity.

Step 4: Develop goals and measurable objectives based on your assessment and identified priorities.

By now, if you have worked through the steps outlined above, you should have some ideas about the specific goals and measurable objectives that will lead you to a sustainable mentoring program. This is the exciting part, the building of a clear road map that will take you from knowing where you are to knowing where you want to go and how to get there.

Identifying goals and objectives can be an exciting and dynamic process for your team, and one that requires careful facilitation and enough time to really examine these important ideas. Goals should be brainstormed, discussed, and prioritized first, before you get into the more detailed work of listing specific objectives and activities. Make sure you have a clear process that will allow initial creativity and good discussion, followed by a means of narrowing the ideas into a few that respond best to your stated priorities and your assessment results. Brainstorming can be effective initially, but be sure that discussion and narrowing follow. An example of a group decisionmaking process is provided in Appendix B ("Multi-Voting: A Group Decision-Making Tool").

To create meaningful goals and objectives, keep these definitions in mind:

GOALS are broad statements that describe the change you hope to achieve. They are more abstract than objectives but they should be specific enough to allow you to know when you have achieved success. Examples of goals, based on the sample priorities above, might be as broad as these:

Achieve stable and diversified resources to support current service levels.

Develop a comprehensive marketing plan to increase local program visibility.

Or as specific as this:

Replace 75 percent of federal funding with local resources to ensure continuous funding after 2007.

OBJECTIVES describe the specific, measurable, tangible steps you will take to achieve your goals. The SMART acronym defines objectives as:

S*pecific*	addressing the "what, when, and how much" questions
M*easurable*	so that you know what it looks like when you get there
A*chievable*	within the capacity of your organization to carry out the objective
R*ealistic*	given your current internal and external reality
T*ime-bound*	providing a definite end-point for accomplishing the objective

Consider these two examples:

> *By June 30, 2007, raise $100,000 in new funding to replace federal grant through a combination of local public and private grants and fundraising events in the local community.*

> *Develop a marketing toolkit that provides a consistent image of our organization to be used to recruit volunteers and solicit funds beginning January 1, 2007.*

These objectives tell you what is going to happen, when it will be done, and how we will know if it has been accomplished. Objectives do not describe specific activities that will be used to achieve the desired outcome, but they do provide a framework that will help you identify specific activities, assign responsibilities, and create timelines to track progress.

Step 5: Develop activities with realistic timelines, and assign roles for accountability

It's time to get specific! Your team has developed a clear path, from establishing priorities for sustainability, to identifying some important goals, to crafting specific, measurable objectives that support these goals. The activities and timelines that you now develop are the nuts and bolts of moving from planning to action—the blueprint that gives staff, board, and stakeholders specific tasks, responsibilities, and milestones to measure success.

As with the other steps, involve and inform your primary staff, board, or advisory group of the ideas you come up with. Check with people within and beyond your agency to see if your plans are realistic, and make sure you have the resources you need to carry them out. It's easy to get excited by a really great strategy, only to realize down the road that it's beyond your current capacity to make it work.

To get a sense of how activities relate to goals, let's look again at our previous example:

GOAL: *Achieve stable and diversified resources to support current service levels.*

OBJECTIVE: *By June 30, 2007, raise $100,000 in new funding to replace federal grant through a combination of local public and private grants and fundraising events in the local community.*

ACTIVITY 1:   *Obtain private foundation funding in the amount of $25,000 by December 30, 2006.*

- Talk to agency grant writer and school district development director to obtain ideas and advice, and get them to commit to spending time on this project.

- Research local and regional private foundations and identify five to approach for funding.

- Develop a boilerplate grant application for submission to private foundations.

. . . and so on.

As you can see, activities need to be broken down into specific tasks that also have deadlines and a person or persons assigned to carry out each task. These tasks will form an action plan for each activity identified. The worksheet on the next page, using the steps in the above example, provides a way to first identify activities that will help you reach your objective, and then keep track of each activity and the tasks associated with it. This kind of planning tool is intended to be an internal document that can be added to or modified as planning progresses. A blank worksheet is included in Appendix B.

Tips for Developing Action Plans

Creating clear action plans and timelines is one of your most important tasks, because it documents your road map to success, milestones that measure progress, and the person who is in charge of each task. To make an action plan that is useful and realistic, be sure that:

- The person identified as having primary responsibility for a specific activity is fully involved in developing task lists and timelines

- Activities relate directly to one or more of the objectives you have established, and tasks relate directly to the activities identified

- All activities and tasks are within the capacity of current staff skills and agency resources

- Timelines are realistic but not lax—there is a balance between maintaining a level of pressure to get the jobs done and stressing out you and your staff so much that they are destined to fail

- Each task is measurable so that you know when it's been accomplished and can cross it off the list

Goal: Achieve stable and diversified resources to support current service levels

Objective 1	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved
Raise $100,000 in new funding to replace Federal grant	Implement annual fund drive to raise $25,000 from individual donors	6/30/06	Samantha Smith
	Apply for three new foundation grants to obtain $40,000	Grant 1: 1/30/06 Grant 2: 3/30/06 Grant 3: 6/30/06	Judy Green & Joe White
	Hold annual auction to raise $30,000	11/10/06	Jane Dough

Objective 2	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved
Increase long-range sustainability by establishing corporate giving program that will raise $50,000 annually beginning in 2007	Increase long-range sustainability by establishing corporate giving program that will raise $50,000 annually beginning in 2007	10/15/06	Agency director & Board chair

Objective 3	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved
Form partnerships that provide $10,000 worth of in-kind resources (paper, printers, copiers, office furniture, etc.)	Talk with three local office supply/office equipment businesses to obtain in-kind donations	1/15/06	Joseph Smithers

☞ **A blank version of this worksheet is in Appendix B: "Goals, Objectives, and Activities Worksheet"**

Sample Action Plan

Objective: By June 30, 2007, raise $100,000 in new funding to replace federal grant through a combination of local public and private grants and fundraising events in the local community.

Activity 1: Obtain private foundation funding in the amount of $25,000 by December 30, 2006.

Action Steps	Owner	Due Date
Talk to Joan Jones (agency grant writer) to get ideas and advice, and obtain commitment to spending time on researching foundations	Sam Smith	March 1, 2006
Talk to school district development director to obtain ideas and advice, and obtain commitment to provide consulting time (4 hours per month)	Sam Smith	March 1, 2006
Research local and regional private foundations and identify five to approach for funding	Joan Jones	May 1, 2006
Make a list of each foundation, with submission requirements, deadlines, tentative amount to be requested from each, and purpose of requests	Joan, with input from Mike Brown (mentoring director)	May 15, 2006
Develop a boilerplate grant application for submission to private foundations	Sam, with input from Joan	June 1, 2006
Develop one-page budget for use in grant applications	Henry Gates, (finance officer)	June 1, 2006
Send draft boilerplate and budget to director, board treasurer, and school district development director for review and comment	Mike Brown	June 15, 2006
Begin grant submissions based on deadlines of identified foundations	Sam, with help from team	July 1, 2006

☞ **A blank Action Plan Tracking Tool is provided in Appendix B.**

Choosing the "Right" Resource Development Activities

One of the most important things you can do when developing specific resource development activities is to assess whether each is right for your program. Use the assessment and planning information and the goals and objectives you have established to help you develop a strategy that makes sense. As you consider a specific direction to take, ask yourself the questions in the box at the right.

Using Timelines

As discussed earlier in this section, the objectives and activities you establish must include timelines that are realistic and meet your funding requirements. Creating a timeline of your resource needs can give you a clear picture of where you are, where you are going, and how long it will take you to get there. You can use something like the example on page 31 or create your own using the blank template in Appendix B; you can also include on your timeline other resources such as recruiting new volunteers or board members.

1. First examine your current situation:

Primary funding source:	OSFDS grant
Expires:	9/31/20xx
Renewable:	No
% of budget:	100
Other funding sources:	None

2. Make a timeline to help you visualize *what* has to happen *when*.

3. As your planning team examines different funding options, consider which ones offer the best possibilities given the amount of time you have to get new funding. Ask yourself these questions:

    ■ How much do you need to raise in each quarter in order to meet your fundraising goals?

    ■ What is your timeline for moving the activity along? Are there approval processes that you need to take into account? What about staff time limitations? Be realistic!

Choosing a resource activity? Ask yourself . . .

■ Does the source fit your vision and mission? Some programs develop a set of ethical considerations that help them decide whether a particular funding source is a good fit for their program.

■ Does the funding strategy meet the objectives you have identified in the timeframe you have set?

■ Does your program have the capacity to take on a particular strategy: money, staff time, connections, administrative support, board strengths, and so on?

■ Does getting the grant/gift entail so much red tape from the funding source that it compromises your program?

■ Will the fundraising strategy help you diversify your funding mix rather than simply extending a single source? While it's certainly a good idea to go after any funding that you feel has great potential for success, the need to diversify should be on your radar screen and some energy should be spent deliberately planning for new types of resources.

☞ **Section 4 describes major types of fund-raising resources and how to use them. Selected online and print fundraising resources are listed in Appendix C.**

- Once the activity is underway, how long will it be before money begins to come into the agency? How long will it take to complete the fundraising activities you have identified? For example, a federal grant can take up to a year from application to approval, while a community foundation grant may have a shorter timeframe. An individual giving campaign may have some immediate results but the proceeds will come in slowly and there are no guarantees of how much will come in during a given period.

4. Once you have a good sense of your timeline and have identified key funding options, make sure you also have some back-up plans that can help you out if one or more of your options falls through. For example, even if you have identified a local community foundation as the most likely source of funding next year, you can also apply for five to 10 smaller private foundation grants using the same boilerplate application. If they all come through, so much the better! Similarly, you can put together a corporate appeal that can also be used with local service organizations.

By now, your timeline will look something like the one on the next page, this time with activities included. Notice that this example uses a monthly breakdown of activities to allow for more detail, beginning with the first month of OSDFS grant funding. Like all good planning tools, timelines are made to be modified. Nothing in the world of resource development is set in stone, so as you move forward be sure to keep reviewing your objectives, activities, and timelines and make changes as needed to ensure that your goals are being achieved.

Step 6. Develop a final document

Once you have finalized your plan, be sure that all the pieces are written down in one place in a format that is accessible to the people who need the information. This may be as simple as putting all documents and notes into a binder and making sure that it is updated as plans change. Your board of directors may want to see a formal report that you can also share with others who have been involved in the planning process and can adapt for use in grant proposals. Other options might include having a shared electronic document that all staff can view, creating a series of posters or a PowerPoint show for use with staff and board members. However you decide to document your plan, remember that its primary function is functionality—it is a practical tool to move your program toward long-term sustainability.

Step 7. Implement the action plan

Once you have breathed a sigh of relief that your plan is done, keep the momentum rolling because the real work is just beginning. Check in with everyone who has responsibilities for the action plan you have developed and make sure everyone understands their job. If different leadership is involved in turning the plan into reality, be sure to pass the torch and fill that new person in on what has been developed. If you are the one who will be guiding the implementation plan, avoid taking on the whole show. Your planning team, your board of directors or advisory board, and other staff and volunteers who have agreed to help are important to the success of the effort. Encourage and support their work as you take on the pieces for which you are responsible.

Fundraising Timeline

Note: 1 = the first month of the program's funding, with the corresponding month abbreviated above.

	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3											
	S	O	N	D	Ja	F	Mar	Ap	Ma	Ju	Jl	Au	S	O	N	D	Ja	F	Mar	Ap	Ma	Ju	Jl	Au	S	O	N	D	Ja	F	Mar	Ap	Ma	Ju	Jl	Au
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
OSDFS Grant																																				
Form grant-writing committee				▲	▲																															
Appoint grant/foundation-opportunity investigator					▲																															
Select, bid on ABC state grant							Write			▲ Award		Funding begins																								
Select, bid on PDQ Corp. grant											Write		▲ Award		Funding begins																					
Apply to Jean Deaux Foundation													▲ Write				▲ Award		Funding begins																	
Apply for federal grant																		▲ Write							▲ Award							Funding begins				
Apply for XYZ Foundation funding																							Write application			Funding approved										
Select event-planning committee				▲																																
Event-planning committee meets			▲												▲			▲			▲			▲			▲			▲			▲			
Fund-raising event #1: Auction Night				▲			▲			▲						▲			▲			▲					▲			▲			▲			
Fund-raising event #2: Car wash							▲			▲					▲				▲	▲		▲								▲	▲					
Fund-raising event #3: Bowling tournament								▲								▲				▲	▲							▲				▲				
Fund-raising event #4: Used book sale							▲			▲								▲			▲								▲			▲				
Fund-raising event #5: Car auction									▲										▲								▲									

. . . and so on

A timeline template is provided in Appendix B.

Monitor and review projects

Your planning team should create a process to regularly monitor the implementation of the plan you've spent so long developing. This should include:

■ Dedicated meetings for reviewing progress.

■ A process for adjusting your plan.

Review

Review meetings should have representation from all staff who have responsibility for one or more of the activities being implemented. Your planning team may decide to disband as clear leadership for the implementation phase is identified, but ideally some of the original team will continue to take a leadership role in ensuring that the intent of the plan is being met. These meetings should focus on updates from everyone involved in order to determine if the plan is on track or needs adjustments. Participants should feel comfortable with the notion that adjustments are normal and not a sign of failure.

Adjusting your plan keeps it alive and avoids frustrations that can develop when reality conflicts with outlined goals and objectives. These changes need to be managed in order to preserve the integrity of your plan. For example, if your original timeline for obtaining private foundation funding is thrown off by the deadlines of the foundations you have identified, your implementation team will need to review the implications of this and make strategic adjustments to your plan. Such a review will usually involve: (1) identifying the need for change, (2) developing alternative strategies, (3) agreeing on a new strategy, and getting approval to make the changes if necessary, and (4) implementing and monitoring the new strategy.

Celebrate success!

Too often the ongoing management of a resource development plan can focus on problems and next steps without taking a moment to pause and consider your accomplishments. It is important not to let this happen to your team as you implement your plan. Stop and take the time to celebrate each achievement, no matter how small. Celebrating success can be as simple as bringing in a cake when milestones are reached or occasional "thank you" cards from the board chair, or more significant celebrations, such as a special luncheon or recognition at an all-agency event. Celebrating major milestones can also be a great way to promote your program to the larger community, through press releases in local papers or stories in a program newsletter. Whatever means you use to celebrate, the positive reinforcement that these activities bring will be a powerful motivating force as you continue to build on these successes.

SECTION 4

Finding and Securing Resources for Sustainability

- ● **Government Funding Resources**
- ● **Foundations**
- ● **Corporate and Business Support**
- ● **Individual Donors**
- ● **Local Support and Events**
- ● **In-Kind Donations**

Funding sources, like gold, are where you find them. Some, like federal government or foundation funding sources, are fairly easy to locate (getting funding from them is a different matter). Others, such as a corporate donor who wants to invest in mentoring, can be trickier to find. Still other opportunities, such as fundraising events, can be created. In this section, we provide an overview of the five major funding resources (plus a few tips on in-kind donations) that are used to support public and private nonprofit organizations, including the pros and cons of using each type. We offer some tips and tools to use as you develop a balanced funding plan for your OSDFS mentoring program. We also point you to a number of valuable resources that will provide more indepth information about these resources and how to use them most effectively to sustain your mentoring program.

Funding sources can be divided into five broad categories, with numerous subcategories: Government; Foundations; Corporate; Local Support and Events; and Individual Giving.

The right mix. What's the right funding mix? There's no one answer to that question, but obviously a mentoring program shouldn't be so reliant upon a single funding source that it will go out of business if that source dries up. In the best of all possible worlds, a mix of all five is ideal, but, as mentioned earlier, the "rule of thumb" is that no more than 30 percent of your funding should come from any one source.

- ■ Government
- ■ Individual Donors
- ■ Corporate Giving
- ■ Private Foundations
- ■ Special Events
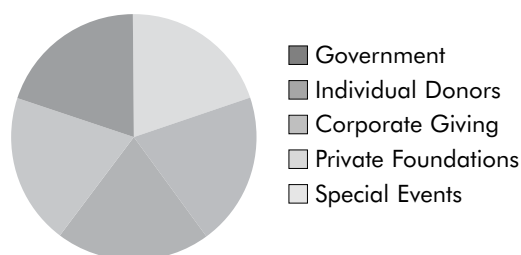
Unfortunately, most OSDFS-funded mentoring programs look like this:

■ Individual donor
□ Government (federal)
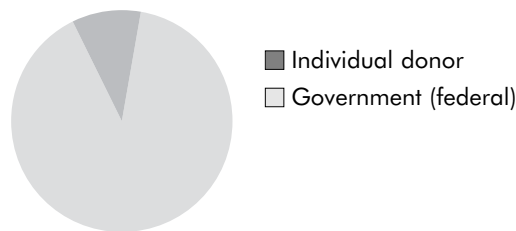
This works fine when you are just starting to develop your program, but federal grants tend to be fairly short lived, and extensions aren't guaranteed. Thus a mentoring program must examine all funding source types, select those that look most promising—that provide the best return for the effort exerted and that fit in with the program's vision and mission—and methodically set about developing a plan to tap into these resources. To use a cliché: Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

The rest of this section describes each major fundraising strategy, with examples and the potential pros and cons inherent in each approach. There are literally thousands of print and Web resources available to coach you on how to use each of these approaches successfully, and a selection of these are available in Appendix C.

Government Funding Resources

The federal government and many state and local (city, county/township) governments fund mentoring programs. Of the three, the federal government is by far the largest funding source, having handed out some $50 million in grants for the U. S. Department of Education's OSDFS-funded Mentoring Programs alone in 2005, another $12 million through the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, $48 million from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, and additional funds through other federal agencies.

Federal funds most often come as a result of legislation that defines the purpose and intent of funding. The funds are released through a competitive grants process in which many organizations are funded (and many more are not). Such initiatives are announced publicly on government agency Web sites and a variety of other locations. They are almost always multi-year grants, though awards are always subject to annual changes in funding and performance.

State and local funds are often much more difficult to track down and vary widely from state to state. Often, state funding comes from federal block grant funding that the state receives for a broad purpose, such as child abuse prevention or improving educational outcomes. City or county funding may be developed in response to an identified community priority, such as reducing the dropout rate. These state and local funds are sometimes passed directly to a

large social service or public human services agency, which in turn may choose to subcontract a portion of the funds for a specific purpose. Keeping abreast of how funds are distributed in your local area, and showing how your mentoring program can help achieve the stated purpose of such funds, is an important job.

The following table offers suggestions for finding government funding opportunities at each level.

Federal	State	Local
■ All competitive funding through the federal government is posted on their searchable Web site: http://www.grants.gov ■ The Online Resources for Funding at the end of this section contains numerous other Web sites with information on federal grants. ■ Current federal grant recipients can ask their contract officers for information about upcoming grants. ■ Subscribe to listservs and professional newsletters and magazines. ■ Maintain positive relationships with public welfare agencies and schools so that they will think of your program when collaborative opportunities arise.	■ Contact your state mentoring partnership (not all states have these). They may know who is funding mentoring programs. ■ Ask your state senator or representative who in your state is interested in mentoring and mentoring-related services. (If you can get your senator/rep interested in what you're trying to do, so much the better.) ■ Check with agencies that have similar interests — human, health, child welfare, education—to see what they're funding. Mentoring can fall under different categories. ■ Keep track of state legislative issues, and find ways to educate state leaders about the positive impact of mentoring.	■ Finding out about local funding for your type of organization often means "being in the loop." So find a loop and get in it: – Attend community meetings. – Attend meetings of city and county government when issues that relate to children and families are on the agenda. (You can usually sign up to receive agendas for such meetings in advance.) – Participate in civic organizations. – Join boards or committees of human, health, child welfare, education services. – Get representation on your board or advisory committees from agencies serving the populations you serve. ■ Find out who's in charge of funding streams in human services and talk to them. (Do this at the state level, too.)

Pros and Cons of Government Funding

Pros . . .	Cons . . .
■ Generous, multi-year dollars ■ Detailed guidelines for proposals ■ Technical assistance often available ■ Impartial review process ■ Usually includes funding for administrative costs ■ Increases agency expertise in grant development	■ Time consuming to apply for, bureaucratic hoops to jump through ■ Large multi-year grants establish a level of funding that is hard to replace ■ Guidelines and requirements can force programs to modify priorities or services to be eligible ■ Administrative demands may be significant ■ Sometimes requires matching funds ■ Lag time between application and award can be significant

☞ **Check the Online Resources for Fundraising table in Appendix C for Web sites that provide information about government funding and if your state has a mentoring partnership.**

Foundations

There are literally thousands of foundations in the United States with billions of dollars at their disposal. Foundations are of three kinds.

■ **Private foundations** are nonprofit, charitable organizations set up by families or individuals and are an important source of funding for nonprofits. Although some are very large and well endowed—names like Ford or Bill and Melinda Gates come to mind—many more are established by people of more modest means. In fact, of the more than 75,000 private foundations that registered with the Internal Revenue Service in 2004, 52,500 had assets of less than one million dollars.[2] This means that even small communities have private foundations that may be interested in funding your mentoring program. Funding from private foundations can range from $1,000 to $100,000—and up—and the process can be as simple as a two-page letter of interest or as complex as a multi-stage process of an initial application followed by a full proposal and personal interview. The good news about

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[2]IRS Business Master File 12/2004, with modifications by the National Center for Charitable Statistics at the Urban Institute. http://nccsdataweb.urban.org

private foundations is that most either have Web sites of their own or are listed on the Foundation Center's searchable site (http://www.fdncenter.org), and they are usually very open to talking with you about their process for obtaining funding.

■ **Corporate foundations** are another kind of private nonprofit foundation, set up by for-profit corporations to provide tax benefits, promote the corporation's mission, or to build goodwill. Corporate foundations generally maintain close ties with the parent company, and their giving usually reflects company interests. Some corporate foundations rely on employee giving as a way to grow their foundation and also involve employees in managing the fund. For example, at Boeing's Employees Community Fund, employees in local communities where Boeing operates manage the funds and choose the community organizations that receive help.

Corporate foundations are distinct from corporate giving programs, which come out of the company's operating budget and are often managed by their marketing department. See the section on corporate giving that follows for more information.

■ **Community foundations** are tax-exempt public charities that are funded by many people in a community who share an interest in improving the quality of life in their area but may lack the resources to set up their own foundation. There are more than 660 such foundations across the United States today. Community foundations are managed by knowledgeable staff who care about both those who fund the foundation and those who seek funding from it. They often take a leadership role in identifying local community issues and needs and offer a number of distinct funding priorities.

Foundation expert Phyllis McGrath suggests that one type of community foundation, the local education foundation (LEF), can be a potential source of funding for mentoring programs, especially those programs with ties to schools.[3] Although these foundations are often small, they are a growing resource in many communities and are worth checking out. Ask your education partner if your community has a local education foundation or visit the Web site of The National School Foundation Association (http://www.schoolfoundations.org /index.cfm), where you can find information about school foundations by state. (If your community doesn't have one, you might hint to your board members and other influential contacts that it could be beneficial to local schools and mentoring programs alike if one got started in your community.)

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[3]*Sustainability Planning and Resource Development for Youth Mentoring,* edited by M. Garringer (Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, National Mentoring Center, 2005, p. 52).

Pros and Cons of Foundations

Pros . . .	Cons . . .
■ Foundations are: – In the business of supporting non-profits – Interested in what you are doing and the health of the communities they support – More willing to support a new idea or project than a government grantor – Have clear, written guidelines, purposes, and priorities ■ Developing strong relationships with foundations can lead to continued support ■ Reporting requirements are often simpler than with government grants	■ Highly competitive ■ Extensive time in research, writing, and follow-up ■ May only fund one or two years ■ Lack of operational support ■ Often only small grants available (less than $10,000)

☞ **Check the Online Resources table in Appendix C for Web sites that provide information about foundations, what they fund, how to apply to them, and much more.**

Corporate and Business Support

Corporations are good sources for direct funding, in-kind donations, and volunteers, because they recognize the benefits such giving can offer them in terms of community recognition and employee retention. National corporations, such as Starbucks or Microsoft, often have both local giving programs and one that can be accessed through a regional or national office. Check company Web sites for information on their corporate giving programs and think about the purpose of your "ask" to decide where to start. For example, if you are seeking a donation of coffee and donuts for your fundraiser, the manager of a local branch of a national grocery chain is likely to be able to help you out, but if you want major sponsorship for a bowl-a-thon it's likely that you will need to make a formal request to the company's headquarters. Check the resources guide at the end of this section for Web sites with information on corporate giving programs.

Developing a corporate volunteer program with a local company can help pave the way for sponsorships and other kinds of support. Many corporations give preference to organizations

that their employees are already involved with, such as volunteering as a mentor, and some actively encourage volunteering by employees, recognizing the benefits such activities offer to both the company and the community.

Small businesses. Like corporations, small businesses can be sources of volunteers, in-kind donations, and financial contributions. Small businesses may have fewer resources for cash donations than larger corporations, but they can become your best friend for obtaining auction prizes, food for special events, donations during holidays, and especially volunteers. Remember, too, that small businesses have a vested interest in their (and your) community, conscientiously strive for a reputation for being a good neighbor, and will benefit from a mentoring program that reduces delinquency and keeps youth in school.

> Supporting nonprofits is one way corporations and local businesses gain recognition as a good citizen. If you receive support from a corporate donor or small business, always ask how it would like to be recognized: in a brochure, your agency newsletter, as part of a public service announcement, or on an event banner. You can never say "thank you" enough.

Pros and Cons of Corporate Support

Pros . . .	Cons . . .
■ Once developed, a strong corporate relationship is a lasting one	■ Time consuming to prepare for a corporate solicitation
■ Corporations can provide volunteers in addition to money	■ It takes time to mature the relationship into a significant source of funding
■ Corporations can be more flexible than a traditional foundation or government grant	■ Rejection is common
■ There is a clear two-way benefit	■ Competition is high—there are lots of good causes out there
■ Opportunity for growth and continued development of the relationship	■ Need to have or develop connections—an "in"
■ Marketing and name recognition opportunities	■ Involvement is essential—you may need to work on board development first.

☞ **For more information on obtaining corporate support, download the National Mentoring Center's** *Sustainability Planning and Resource Development for Youth Mentoring Programs* **at:**
http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/publications.html, p. 41ff.

Individual Donors

These make up the single largest source of funding for nonprofits—The Giving USA Foundation of the American Association of Fundraising Counsel (AAFRC) estimates that individuals account for nearly 80 percent of money given to nonprofits from non-government sources.[4] According to AAFRC, nearly nine out of 10 families in America make charitable contributions of one kind or another, especially to religious institutions, which receive nearly 40 percent of all individual giving.[5] The trick about individual giving is not about a lack of resources, it's about having to ask!

Individual donations can come to your agency through a wide variety of methods:

General population	Board members	Friends	Bequests
People who barely know the name of your program may still contribute if the method is right in front of them. They may: ■ pop coins into a coin box in a restaurant ■ donate at a booth ■ respond to an appeal on a bus or a slide preceding a movie* They may also buy raffle tickets, sign a pledge sheet, or attend an event if the right person asks them. Brainstorm other ways to appeal to local citizens. * These appeals may be worded to induce individuals to volunteer as well.	Board members should be made aware up front that they're expected to contribute financially to the mentoring program. Why? Even if it isn't a large amount, it shows commitment—it shows buy-in. But it's also psychological: board members who contribute will find it easier to ask others to contribute, too.	Everyone has friends. And friends have friends. And so on. Ask everyone you know to donate—the amount doesn't have to be huge—but as part of the ask, give them a bookmark, a button, something that says thanks, that they're a part of what you do, and that reminds them to ask their friends. People who contribute have bought in to the program, making it easier for them in turn to ask others to help.	A surprising number of people are willing to leave some or all of their estate to a worthy nonprofit. Spend some time (with a talented volunteer) developing a brochure or letter explaining how a bequest, even a small one, can make a lasting legacy. Make it easy to do: talk to the lawyer on your board about developing a simple bequest letter or text that can be copied into a will. Note: Bequests may not be a promising funding source for a new mentoring program. People tend to make bequests to established organizations, ones they hope will be around for the long term.

[4]2004 Contributions: $248.52 Billion by Source of Contributions [Chart]. In *Giving USA 2005: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2004*, by The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University (Glenview, IL: AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy, 2005).

[5]*Giving and Volunteering in the United States, 2001: Findings from a National Survey*, by Westat, Inc. (Washington, DC: Independent Sector, 2001). http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/GV01main.html

Individual giving has tremendous potential for OSFDS mentoring programs because it offers opportunities to develop lasting relationships, opening doors for both fundraising and volunteer development. Individual donors may also be business owners or work for larger corporations who are willing to provide matching funds for contributions made by their employees. If your organization lacks internal expertise in developing an individual giving program, try to locate a volunteer, board member, or local expert who is willing to donate their time to offer encouragement and training. For example, your local United Way may have a staff member who can speak to your team about setting up such a giving program, or a committee chairperson of the volunteer fundraising committee for your school partner may be able to provide support.

Pros and Cons of Individual Giving

Pros . . .	Cons . . .
■ Allows you to talk about the program you love and raise money doing it.	■ Needs strong board and staff support to be successful.
■ Taps a huge community resource.	■ Individual meetings are time consuming.
■ Encourages development of individual supporters who will stand by your program.	■ People don't like to ask for money.
■ Free of government or private foundation reporting requirements.	■ Results can be disappointing— it's hard to hear "No."

☞ **Appendix A offers more information on getting your board involved in resource development, a key factor for implementing a successful individual giving drive.**

Local Support and Events

Local Support

Local support is all about public relations, about selling your mentoring program to your community's businesses, civic organizations, neighborhood leaders, schools, churches, police, fire, and medical services . . . everything and everyone that comprises your "community." It's up to you, your staff, your board members to tell the members of your community what mentoring is all about, its vision and goals. You have to explain that a mentor who has helped prevent a youth from dropping out of school or doing drugs or joining a gang, or spray

Why fund us?

Before you write that first grant application, that first proposal to a foundation, that first "pitch" to a local small business, write down at the top of a sheet of paper, "Why you should fund us." Underline the word should. Then write down as many reasons why as you can think of.

Need for our program:

- The three high schools in our service area have a dropout rate of 32%

- Only 12% of these students have a C average or better

- 63% of the students are from one-parent homes

- Over half of the students have to work after school to help their families financially

- The pregnancy rate has gone from 9% to 13% among girls 13 to 18 in the past four years

- 42 boys and 27 girls are on our wait list for a mentor

What our program is doing successfully:

- We currently have 32 youth being mentored

- Since we opened our doors in 1999, 78% of our matches have lasted a year or longer

- 98% of the youth we have mentored have graduated

- 85% of the youth we have mentored have shown improvements in school grades

- 88% of the youth we have mentored have improved their school attendance rates

Spend much time on your strongest reasons why. You'll use them in all your applications, presentations, and recruiting literature.

painting graffiti on a storefront has benefited them. At the same time, you have to let them know your mentoring program exists. Even if they've heard of it, they probably haven't given it—or mentoring in general—much thought. You need to explain how mentoring benefits them, and how your program is making mentoring successful in their community.

To focus your efforts, first determine who your "community" is. A "community" can be a neighborhood/ward/district in a big city, or can encompass all of a small, Midwestern town. Once you've determined your turf, join community organizations, attend open meetings, go to church potlucks and business association luncheons. Spread your literature throughout the community. The more you're known in the community, the easier it is to get yourself invited to tell your "story" before civic groups and PTAs, to put coin boxes by cash registers, to get your flyers displayed in store windows.

Once members of your community know who you are and all about your good work, they'll be more receptive to your "ask"— whether it's for volunteer help, in-kind donations (see page 45), money, or sitting on your board.

Making presentations to local businesses, county or city government leaders, service clubs, and others in your community is an important way to generate local support. Here are some tips for making a successful presentation:

- **Have a script.** Decide in advance what your "story" is. Include your mentoring program's vision and goals. Highlight program successes—people are more likely to support a successful enterprise than one that sounds like it's floundering. Explain what your program does and how it benefits the community.

In-kind Donations

In-kind donations are typically more informally acquired than grants. In themselves they won't fund your program, but they can save money that would otherwise have to come out of your coffers.

Things to ask for:

■ **Office equipment.** A computer that's too old or a laser printer that's too slow for a company could be ideal for your needs. (An older version of software can be a great aquisition, too; just be sure you can use it legally.)

■ **Used office furniture.** Desks, chairs, tables, file cabinets, fans, table lamps . . . Larger companies often have regular giveaways of these items—watch for public notices in newspapers or find out who does this in your area and get on their notification list.

■ **Office and meeting space.** The free use of a spare room or two (or greatly reduced rent). Maybe from a school partner, neighborhood library, a church, civic organization, local business . . .

■ **Advertising space.** Newspapers can contribute free ads, billboard companies may have unused spots you can use; radio and TV stations can donate air time. Potential advertising space can be found on sides of buses, taxis, buildings, in store windows, on restaurants counters . . .

■ **Expendables.** Paper, tape, envelopes, pens and pencils, file folders, paper clips . . .

■ **Services.** Photocopying flyers, designing a poster, tech consulting, making a banner . . . many companies offer these services and other services free (or greatly reduced prices).

■ **Event and meeting donations.** Grocery stores, restaurants, bakeries—these can contribute donuts and coffee to one of your meetings, sponsor a fundraising event, provide T-shirts with your program's name . . . Great publicity for the donor, too.

How to ask:

1. **Be specific.** Don't just say "Donations Needed."
2. **Advertise in a community newspaper.** Stress that you're a neighborhood nonprofit. Mention tax write-offs. See if you can get the paper to include a brief story about your work.

Sample Ad

Help Yourself . . . Help Us!

The XYZ Mentoring Center, a nonprofit working with at-risk kids in Valley Crest, needs donations of new or used office equipment in good working order. Specifically, we need:

Laser printer	Fax machine
Computer with	Photocopier
Windows XXX or newer	

We also need copier paper, file cabinets, chairs, and desks.

To find out how to make a donation, call 555-333-91xx.

***Your tax-deductible donation can help
make a difference!***

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3. **Solicit during fundraising events.** Let people know that even if they can't give cash, they can donate time, equipment, furniture, supplies . . .
4. **Tie in with other occasions.** If you're promoting your program at a local civic organization, add a brief pitch for donations. (Mention in-kind support any time you are speaking with a potential donor.)

Pros and Cons of In-Kind Donations

Pros . . .	Cons . . .
■ Easy (comparatively) to get—no grants to apply for. ■ Everyone has something to donate. ■ Incentive: Businesses get tax deductions (and maybe publicity) for donating things they no longer need. ■ Can get you in the door and lead to other kinds of support.	■ You'll get junk. Some will try to palm off useless stuff with good intentions; some, alas, to save taking it to the town dump. Be polite but firm when someone tries to pull this on you.

☞ **Go to http://members.tripod.com/~awchu/freestuf.htm to learn about companies that make in-kind donations.**

You don't have to bring a written script, but do prepare one behind the scenes so you won't forget anything—it can be an outline or bullet points. You might want to have index cards with key points with you that you can refer to discreetly if you tend to forget things. Keep these for future use, and develop different versions for different occasions.

■ **Bring help.** Asking others who are part of your program to participate in your presentation—board members, mentors, mentees, parents—is helpful if you're uncomfortable making presentations; just make sure the person you ask to help is good at making presentations. (But don't bring a cast of thousands.)

■ **Bring materials to hand out.** Bring along brochures and business cards. You want them to remember your name, the name of your program, where you're located, and how to get in touch with you. Make sure all your materials are up to date and look professional.

■ **Use visuals.** People remember much better when they see your message in addition to hearing it. Have a snazzy PowerPoint presentation. Write on marker boards or newsprint. Have posters the whole room can see. Do whatever you can to add the visual element.

■ **Tell them what you need.** Making a presentation is only half the battle. You also have to tell your audience what you want them to do and how they can do it. Do you want them to give you money? Volunteer (or supply volunteers)? Donate in-kind materials? You may not be ready to make a specific request but just want an opportunity to meet with them again or invite them to come to an orientation session for volunteers, upcoming event, or a tour of your program site.

■ **Benefits—and credit.** Explain how supporting your mentoring program will benefit them: better schools, less crime, etc., true, but also it will polish their image as a "good citizen" and a responsible, reliable, good-to-do-business-with member of the community. And if they donate to your cause, they'll get proper recognition.

■ **Listen to them.** Make sure you're building an opportunity for them to ask questions and talk about their own interests in helping children. Keep track of what they say and use it to focus your future conversations with them.

■ **Don't overstay your welcome.** Keep your presentation brief—15 to 20 minutes should be about right (you'll get good at gauging such things).

■ **Provide contact information.** Make sure they know how to get in touch with you. Again, this should be on your business card and in your brochure. Don't assume they'll notice it—point it out to them.

■ **Get names and follow up.** If some in your audience want more information, get their names and follow up. Don't wait for them to contact you.

Events

Events are another important way to tap into local support by providing a way for businesses to make an easy donation such as an auction gift, in-kind printing, or buying a block of tickets for their employees. Events also reach out to the broader community by offering a fun activity that anyone can attend. Planned events can be surprisingly lucrative or generate little financially but provide community awareness, volunteers, youth interest in being mentored, in-kind donations, and a valuable mailing list of potential future donors or volunteers. An event that becomes a regular annual happening that everyone in your community becomes familiar with can turn into the bread and butter of your mentoring program. A list of successful event ideas on the following pages shows the range of possibilities.

> **Remember . . .**
> even if an event doesn't raise a lot of money, it can still be a valuable source of volunteers, partnerships, publicity, networking, etc.

As with any potential source of funding, an event may not pan out. Advance planning combined with multiple outcomes can help prevent this unpleasant occurrence. Be thorough in your research if you are planning an event. Know how much it will cost, how much you want to generate in funds, what other purposes your event will serve, how much time it will take to put on (and the best times of day and year to hold it), how many volunteers you will need, and what happens if proceeds don't meet your expectations. It is probably a good idea to start small and to talk with an event planning expert before getting too invested in the event.

Pros and Cons of Events

Pros . . .	Cons . . .
■ Provides opportunities for volunteer recruitment and marketing	■ Requires commitment of funds in advance of event
■ Taps individual and corporate funds while giving something in return	■ Can be very time consuming for staff and volunteers
■ Mentors and mentees can participate	■ If not well planned, can result in actual losses of revenue
■ Builds new business partners and individual donor lists	■ Competes with other agencies in doing events

☞ **See "Holding a Fundraiser: Developing a Plan" in Appendix B for more information on how to plan and implement a successful event.**

Events I've Seen Work
by Miki Hodge

Soup for the Soul. This winter event works with local ceramic artists to create soup bowls. Attendees buy the bowl and in return get to sample several soups, homemade breads, and desserts donated by local restaurants. Combining a silent auction with this event makes for a great evening.

Microphone Marathon. Working with your favorite local radio station, get DJs on board to sell donated items in this live auction–type approach. Talk about exposure for mentoring! Several phones are set up at the radio station to take callers' bids, and the DJ helps promote your cause between songs and advertising from sponsors. The "marathon" portion keeps the DJs working until your organization has raised its auction goals. This event is great during the holiday season when people are in the mood for shopping.

Taste of (your town's name). Food can draw a crowd and is a relatively low-cost donation for most restaurants. Maneuvering local chefs to compete with one another offers a great incentive for restaurants and attracts media. This type of event is already very popular and it can be a low-cost effort. Sponsors abound for these types of events.

Black Tie Gala with a $ Twist! I went to a gala that raised $20,000 due to a unique theme. Tickets were $100, and only 250 tickets were available. Attendees received a great meal and live music. The gimmick? One lucky person would walk out with $5,000 that night! The odds for winning were good, one in 250! Simply get your location, dinner, and music donated and give away a portion of your ticket sales. This event is a huge hit year after year. The hotel that donates the space and food receives an average of 200 people paying to stay in their hotel for the night.

Cardboard Derby/Wacky Craft Races. Strange as it may seem, people love to build wacky crafts out of odd materials and maneuver them over snow, water, grass, and parking lots. This event draws curious onlookers, vendor interest, and sponsors' attention, especially if you are creative with the event materials (for example, invitations made out of the same materials the cars are made out of). This event offers silly fun while bringing in the bucks.

Business Scavenger Hunts. Get local businesses to sponsor their own "team building" event by competing in an afternoon Scavenger Hunt against other local groups. You outfit the teams with digital or Polaroid cameras to take pictures of themselves with each item they need to find on their list. Businesses love to compete for the obnoxious trophy (that your program youth make!) and crave the media attention they get while supporting your effort. Program kids and mentors can also participate!

Silent Auctions. Include creative bidding items, such as the mayor taking the highest bidder fishing, the sheriff staying one night in a cell, a famous local chef making dinner in your home, a principal doing homework with your child. Have fun with silent auction potential.

Even More Events . . .

Bid on a "Dream Date" with local celebrity bachelors/bachelorettes. Provides great dinners and activities to a Dating Game type of event.

Golf Tournaments (can range from serious to silly formats)

Dine Out for Youth Night (numerous restaurants donate a percentage of the proceeds)

Tomato Wars (people love the stress release!)

Music Festivals

Jail-a-Thons

Dive-In Movies at your local swimming pool (*Jaws!*)

Casino Nights

Chocolate Fantasia Extravaganzas. Local dessert chefs, chocolate shops participate with any food that can be chocolate! Tickets are sold to chocolate lovers to come sample an extravaganza of different chocolate desserts and drinks. The event is great to hold on Valentine's Day!

Run/Bike/Walk/Swim Events

Non-Events. People pay to stay home, which saves the organization the costs of running an event.

Local Celebrity Dodge Ball, Volley Ball, Baseball, Broom Hockey

Tail Gate-a-Thon. If your town has serious sports fans, find out if they have a "tail gate party organizer" for the sports team or facility where the sports are played. Tailgaters obtain donations for consecutive hours tailgating before the big game.

Bowling/Karaoke-a-Thon. Ask your local bowling league if they would hold a tournament to benefit your mentoring efforts. Attach a Karaoke contest and the event is fun for everyone!

Used with permission from: *Sustainability Planning and Resource Development for Youth Programs*, edited by M. Garringer (Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, National Mentoring Center, 2005, pp. 122–123).

In Closing . . .

- Moving Forward

- Sustainability Tips for When Time Is Limited

Moving Forward

Finding replacement funding for your OSDFS mentoring program can be a daunting challenge. We hope this book has provided you with valuable tools and a process you can adapt to find ongoing success. The U.S. Department of Education created its mentoring initiative to provide critical mentoring services where there were none previously, or to greatly expand efforts already underway. It is therefore imperative that your program's leadership rises to the challenge and finds creative ways to build financial and community support that will make your mentoring program a lasting one.

As you move forward, using this book and other resources to guide you, there are two final pieces of advice that our staff offers based on our years of helping programs of all types meet this challenge:

1. Focus on the needs of the youth you serve. This sounds obvious, but many programs lose sight of this when the chase for money begins. Getting a federal grant to provide a different kind of mentoring service or foundation money that has lots of strings attached may save your program and the jobs of your staff, but it may not necessarily serve your kids better. It may keep the doors open, but at what cost? So as you diversify your funds, ask yourself:

   ■ Will getting this money help our kids?

   ■ Are we willing to change our services to get new funding?

   ■ Are we willing to partner with other agencies, even former "rivals," if that's the best way to meet the needs of our youth and community?

■ Are we prepared to close our program down properly if our funding efforts fail? Or are we setting our matches up for a bad ending if the program closes?

By placing the youth you serve at the heart of your sustainability work, you are staying true to your mission and ensuring that, no matter what happens with your future, you are moving forward with the right intentions.

2. Believe in the work you do and fight for it. The sad truth is that almost no youth-serving organization in America truly has the funding and resources it needs to fully accomplish its mission. Your organization, like almost every other nonprofit or youth-serving agency, faces an uphill battle in securing the resources you'll need to do your important work. This should not be discouraging, however; it should be motivating.

Those of us that are doing good work with our youth will only get the resources we need when we stand up for ourselves, advocate strongly for the youth we serve, and demand that our communities step up to the plate. To do this we need to be passionate about the work we do. Religious organizations in America are very successful in raising funds because they have embraced the meaningfulness of what they do and unashamedly ask for support to do their important work. The services your mentoring program provides are valuable to your community. Take pride in them, be passionate about them, and document and share the success you have. Turn your passion for the youth you serve into action. Start raising the bar in your community, start redefining what it means to "be involved." Until our mentoring programs have the funding they need to continue, no one can say that our communities are "involved enough."

So fight long and hard for your program, because in doing so you are helping to change the culture of support for youth-serving organizations in this country. If we all bring our passion to the table, maybe there will come a day in America when raising replacement funds for a federal grant will not be so challenging. But that's only going to happen if we change our communities, one "ask" at a time.

Best of luck to your programs as you move forward. And remember that the MRC is always here to help your program find sustainability and success.

—The MRC staff

Sustainability Tips for When Time Is Limited

As you read this guide you may find yourself feeling overwhelmed at the thought of adding even more activities to an already busy workload. Although there are no easy solutions to long-range sustainability, the following 10 strategies can help keep you moving forward.

1 **Take "baby steps."** Devote at least one hour a week to sustainability. Research on-line for grants. Write a letter of request to a foundation. Take a short course on fundraising (or grant writing). Contact current or prospective donors. Investigate fundraising software.

2 **Don't try to do it all yourself.** Recruit a small, select team for as-needed help. Use e-mail and the phone to save time. Find a committed board member or volunteer with experience in resource development. Enlist someone on your staff who can offer assistance. You can't do this work alone!

3 **Put resource development on the agenda** of every staff, board, or advisory meeting. Keep everyone up-to-date on progress toward sustainability goals. Ask for new ideas. Get commitments from the board to carry out a fundraising activity or share a new fundraising strategy with them. Keep everyone engaged in sustainability!

4 **Review the five major fundraising strategies** in Section 4. Which ones could you begin to implement right away? Which would be harder to undertake? Decide what kinds of activities will work best for your organization and build them into your fundraising timeline.

5 **Make a timeline.** Your timeline should show how much funding you have, when it ends, and how much you need to raise and by when. Turn money-raising goals into monthly benchmarks and plug in activities that will help you reach them. Breaking tasks down can make them seem more doable. See Section 3 for more on timelines.

6 **Write a fundraising "boilerplate."** In no more than two pages describe the need for your program, its goals, objectives, and successes, who it serves, and why it is worthy of being funded. Include a brief budget. List partnerships. You can use this information in all the materials you develop.

7 **Develop short marketing "packages"** tailored to different funding sources or individuals who you think may be interested in supporting your cause. How would you sell your program to a foundation whose primary interest is academic achievement? How about a donor who wants to help kids in poverty? Don't change your mission, but find language that speaks to different audiences.

8 **Make your program known.** Create materials about your program that are easy to read and look professional. Make presentations at public community meetings. Talk to other programs about your services. Keep school district board members, principals, and other educators informed. Make at least one outside connection each week. The more people hear about your program, the better!

9 **Be open to new partnerships and develop those you already have.** A strong partnership can lead to new funding or ways to collaborate and save money while serving kids better. Keep partners engaged and listen to their needs and advice.

10 **Stay focused!** Decide on a resource development goal that makes the most sense for you and your program, develop a plan to achieve that goal, and move ahead. Put a big chart on your office wall that helps you and your helpers stay on track.

Involving the Board

"Involving Your Board in Sustainability Planning"

- **The Top Ten Responsibilities of a Social-Profit Board**

- **Statement of Board Member Responsibilities: A Contract for Success**

- **Board Member Pledge**

- **Board Member Resource Commitment Form**

- **Board Self-Assessment Questions**

Articles and forms in Appendix A are from Individual Giving by Craig Bowman, in *Sustainability Planning and Resource Development for Youth Mentoring Programs,* edited by Michael Garringer (Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005). These and a host of other resources are also available through Common Ground Consulting, http://www.consultcommonground.com

Involving Your Board in Sustainability Planning

It has been said that "A great board is a victory, not a gift," and I agree. It requires a tremendous amount of time, energy, hard work, and commitment to manifest a strong board of directors. It is not easy, but I can promise you that the rewards are well worth it.

Over the years, so much has been written about board development, that I am hesitant about undertaking any effort which attempts to reinvent the wheel. Therefore, it is simply my goal to offer a few essential tools to help you as you work to involve your board members in sustainability planning. My hope is that introducing and using these tools will create opportunities for your board to embrace the roles and responsibilities that are critical to your organization's overall success.

Many years ago, the National Center for Non-Profit Boards (now known as Board-Source[6]) first published a list of the top ten responsibilities of social-profit[7] boards of directors. I am going to use a slightly modified version of that framework to articulate my thoughts on the key aspects of a board's work. Once we have a clear understanding of these ten roles, I will offer several tools to help you improve the functioning of your board and move them into a sustainability mindset.

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[6] BoardSource is a tremendous resource for staff and board members of social-profit organizations. They offer publications, training, technical assistance, consulting, and many other useful resources. On the web at: http://www.boardsource.org/.

[7] I will use social-profit, rather than non-profit, throughout this piece to emphasize the importance of our sector. Our work actively creates benefits for society, it generates a new kind of profit, and it adds value. This language better captures the work that we do.

The Top Ten Responsibilities of a Social-Profit Board

1. Determine the organization's mission, vision, strategic goals, and values

Every organization has a purpose and usually social-profits call this the mission. It is essentially why you exist—the "condition" your work addresses. Some organizations have articulated vision statements which describe how you would like the world to look if your mission was achieved. I am going to assume that you have defined goals and objectives (essential ingredients for sustainability). And, finally, I will tell you that your organization has its own unique set of values, even if they have not been put on paper.

All of these aspects of your organization, though they may begin elsewhere, are ultimately the purview of the board. They have the final say. The buck stops with them. It is their job to define these elements, refine or redefine them when necessary, and ultimately ensure that they are guiding the work of your organization.

2. Select the chief executive (executive director)

One of the most important responsibilities of any social-profit board is the selection of the chief executive, known in many organizations as the executive director. This person is responsible for managing the organization's day-to-day operations and serves as the primary person responsible for carrying out the board's policies and implementing its vision.

The selection of the chief executive requires careful consideration of a variety of factors and should follow a well-developed and agreed upon selection framework. Board members must be cognizant of the organization's mission vision, goals, and values; as well as staff morale and needs, current constituency data, programmatic considerations, financial condition, etc. The board is responsible for developing the chief executive's job description, managing a clearly defined search and selection process and ultimately negotiating and contracting with the desired candidate.

3. Support the chief executive and assess their performance

The board's responsibilities with the chief executive only begin with that person's selection and hiring. It is incumbent upon the board, especially the board chair/president and other officers to provide ongoing support to the person in this role. The job of chief executive is not easy and it can be isolating as this person is both responsible to groups of people (the board and stakeholders) and responsible for groups of people (staff and volunteers).

The board's job is to ensure the organization's overall success and yet must, by design, turn over much of its ability to affect change to the chief executive. This requires a positive and healthy working relationship and a considerable amount of trust going in both directions.

At the same time, it is also the board's job to assess the chief executive's performance and take action when that person is not meeting their obligations to the organization or is in violation of the organization's policies or values. These are never easy decisions, but they do represent a clear area of

responsibility for a well-functioning board of directors.

4. Ensure that effective organizational planning takes place

When organizations talk about planning, they could mean any number of things—short-term programmatic goal-setting, the creation of fundraising or financial benchmarks, the development of staff workplans or program timelines, etc.

When it comes to this aspect of the board's work, I am primarily talking about formal strategic planning. The kind of planning that usually involves hiring a consultant (which in this case I recommend), authorizing a planning committee, gathering extensive internal and external data, involving a wide variety of stakeholders, convening meetings and retreats, and ultimately developing a long-term (I recommend three year) planning tool.

Strategic planning requires a tremendous amount of work and it involves everyone in the organization at particular points. It is the board's job to determine and manage that process.

5. Ensure that there are adequate organizational resources

Another of the essential elements of an effective board is its ability to contribute time, talent, and treasure—especially treasure! It is absolutely necessary for every board member to be a financial investor in your organization. Eight out of ten, ninety percent, it doesn't matter. It is not good enough. Every single board member must be an investor. It sends a powerful message when they are and an even more powerful message when they are not.

Having said that, the amount of their investment is less important than the fact that they give. Don't get me wrong, their giving should be a stretch. It should not be easy. It should match their passion for the critical, life-changing work of your organization. But the most important goal here is 100% of them should be giving.

I've written a lot about raising money from individuals in another chapter in this book, which I encourage you to read. Your board members should also read that chapter! Ensuring adequate resources means learning to be comfortable asking people for the things your organization needs to do its work. This is the job of the board. It is the job of the chief executive. It is the job of the development staff as well as the program staff. It is everyone's job.

But it is the board's responsibility.

6. Ensure that organizational resources are managed effectively

Hand in hand with raising money and securing resources is paying attention to how those resources are managed. Here again, this is the job of many people, but it is the board that must assume final authority and ultimate responsibility. The fiduciary responsibilities of managing a social-profit organization are numerous. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) affords organizations like ours certain benefits in exchange for improving the public good. They also require us to operate according to explicit guidelines and generally accepted accounting practices. Our foundation and corporate partners and our individual investors all have certain expectations and sometimes clear conditions for how their resources are used. It is likely that they will expect a formal audit to be conducted and it is the board's job to solicit bids and engage an audit firm.

The board is the fiduciary authority for the organization and they are responsible col-

lectively and even individually for the financial actions of the organization. In many states, a board member's personal assets are at risk if an organization they serve operates improperly. Being a social-profit board member has many rewards and its share of risks. It demands commitment, understanding, engagement, and passion. Every board member must be up for the challenge.

7. Monitor programs in relation to mission, vision, strategic goals, and values

Although I am not a big fan of board involvement in programmatic issues, it is important that the board ensure that the organization does not stray far from its articulated priorities. Opportunities always present themselves and staff are always working to do more, often with less. Funding opportunities or shifting donor priorities, for example, can cause organizations to stretch and twist in order to meet budget targets. Sometimes it is necessary. Sometimes it causes organizations to lose focus.

The board should know about the organization's programs, where it is soliciting funds, and how the work aligns with the board's priorities. I recommend that the board require the chief executive to provide this information as part of their formal reporting process; and that the board exercise due diligence in reviewing the program's initiatives whenever possible.

8. Enhance the organization's public standing

It is always important for social-profit organizations to carefully manage their public image. Our ability to build interest in our work is often tied to how well known we are in our communities. Board members can and must play a central role in introducing the organization to their friends, family, col-

leagues, and associates. They must act as ambassadors, even missionaries, for your great work whenever and wherever they can.

They will need information about your programs and access to your best thinking about how to characterize your work. It will be helpful to offer them training in how to speak about the impact of your efforts and it will be important to send them frequent updates.

Board members should assess the opportunities they have in their life to make their involvement and commitment to your organization known in the circles in which they live and work. In the chapter earlier in this book on individual donors, I offer a mapping tool which could be helpful for this process. Another approach would be to ask your board members to set up meetings between their contacts and key staff, clients, or volunteers. Perhaps they can represent your organization at meetings, conferences, or community events. This is their chance to share their passion for your work with the people in their lives.

9. Maintain accountability and ensure legal and ethical integrity

As the board is the fiduciary authority when it comes to finances, so too is it the organization's legal authority, contract agent, and responsible party. It is the board's job to ensure that the organization operates in accordance with local, state, and federal laws at all times. It should establish appropriate monitoring policies and retain competent legal representation when necessary.

The board's policies should be developed with attention to legal and ethical issues and it should pay close attention to legal developments in the social-profit sector. Social-profit organizations should also pay extra attention to their risk management prac-

tices, seeking assistance from experts when appropriate. It is the role of the board to get the information it needs from staff or other sources to protect the organization, its reputation, and its assets.

Finally, boards are responsible for making sure that the organization makes ethical decisions that are consistent with its mission, vision, and values. For example, I've written another chapter in this publication that looks at ethical considerations related to your fundraising practices. Another area of concern would focus on personnel policies and staff and volunteer management. There are others and they are all the responsibility of your board.

10. Recruit and orient new members and assess overall board performance

If a board does not assess its own performance, who is going to do it? The chief executive reports to the board and other staff report to the chief executive. It doesn't seem like good process for them to do it. Stakeholders could play a role, but they probably don't have all of the information they would need. Evaluation of the board's performance by funders, donors, supporters, or members seems potentially awkward.

The board has to evaluate itself. There are many tools to assist them in doing it. I'm sure they could spend a lot of money on consultants and processes that could help; and I'm as sure they can do it without a lot of fanfare or expense, too. Later in this chapter, I'll give you a simple self-assessment tool that board members can use to start this process. It will give you some ideas about areas where it might be helpful to focus your improvement efforts.

Boards also are responsible for perpetuating themselves. They should articulate a clear

process for recruitment, nomination, and selection. There should be criteria. The board should create a matrix that indicates the kinds of skills, assets, demographics, experiences, or other things that you want to see represented on your board. The matrix should list current members and what they bring. This will show you what you're missing; and provide a means of establishing your recruitment goals. I believe that a strong board is always thinking about new members. It is a year-round process and it is essential when planning for sustainability.

Given their myriad roles and responsibilities, I believe that it is critical for board members to find ways to hold themselves accountable to the organization, themselves, and each other. In my work with many boards over the years (and as a member of many boards), I have found it useful to create job descriptions (in the form of contracts, signed pledge statements, and codes of conduct) that boards can use to enforce certain standards of involvement. Of course, you'll also need to create the appropriate enforcement mechanisms and identify the person or people charged with that responsibility (usually the board chair/president or other officers).

The following contract encompasses the "Top Ten Responsibilities" from above creating a very clear job description for your board of directors. Before using it, you should modify the document to reflect your board's specific policies and protocols. A pledge form, with space for signatures, and a sample code of conduct follow this contract.

Statement of Board Member Responsibilities:
A Contract for Success

Those who serve on the [Our Organization] board of directors have considerable responsibilities extending well beyond the basic expectations of attending meetings, establishing policy, and personal giving. All board members must:

I.   **Ensure That [Our Organization] Remains True to Itself and Accountable to the Larger Community**

Each board member has primary responsibility for ensuring that [Our Organization] remains true to its mission, vision, goals, and values, always acting first in the interests of our primary stakeholders. It is [Our Organization]'s board of directors that is responsible for maintaining the professional and ethical policies and standards that will ensure that we remain a powerful force for change.

Every board member agrees to comply with [Our Organization]'s Board Member Code of Conduct (attached).

II. **Assume Fiscal and Legal Responsibility**

Membership on the board brings with it both fiduciary and legal responsibilities. An important aspect of serving as a trustee is protecting assets and ensuring that current income is managed properly. Because [Our Organization] is incorporated and granted tax-exempt status to fulfill a public need, the board must assume full responsibility for our financial viability.

Moreover, our staff, our supporters, and school and community service partners depend on the sustainability of our organization. Accordingly, each board member should insist on and carefully review financial monitoring reports prepared by the chief executive; and actively participate in the annual audit and budget preparation/review processes. Board members must also give careful consideration to major expenditures by the organization. In particular, the treasurer of the board should be responsible for making other members aware of the agency's financial position on an ongoing and regular basis.

As trustees, board members are also legally responsible for the organization, and assume full responsibility in all contract and other legal matters. It is the board's responsibility to require appropriate legal counsel for matters which may require legal advice.

It is also the board's responsibility to decide whether to obtain what is commonly known as directors' and officers' liability insurance (or D&O insurance).

III.   Ensure Adequate Resources

Each board member, regardless of whether he or she is serving on the development committee, must accept the idea that fundraising is an essential element of being a board member. At a basic level, each board member must contribute personally to [Our Organization] each year to the extent that she or he is able, and should assist in identifying and evaluating fund raising prospects including individual, foundation, and corporate contacts, as well as participating in [Our Organization]'s special events.

Each board member is expected to complete the "Board Member Resource Commitment Form" (attached) annually.

IV.   Act as an Ambassador for [Our Organization]

In the most basic sense, each board member is required to demonstrate their concern for the organization and take both the work of [Our Organization] and his or her role as a board member seriously. During day-to-day activities, each board member should always be looking for opportunities to help [Our Organization] either personally or through professional contacts and networking. Each board member should know the organization's mission, vision, purposes, goals, policies, programs, services, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and values. Board members should also keep in mind the organization's priorities; and make decisions that will affect the agency only when appropriate and consistent with established procedures.

Each board member must also support the chief executive (and help review his or her performance), support the board chair/president or co-chairs and other board members, and honestly assess his or her own (and, when appropriate, the entire board's) performance.

Board members are also encouraged to volunteer in other capacities within [Our Organization] to the extent that doing so does not interfere with a board member's primary responsibilities.

 V.   Actively Participate in Board Meetings

In order to ensure that [Our Organization] is working toward defined ends, it is essential that every board member attend board meetings. Absent special circumstances, board members are considered resigned if [Insert Your Policy Here]. If a board member is unable to attend a board meeting, she or he should contact the board chair/president prior to the meeting.

It is fundamental to board governance that each board member participate fully in full board and committee meetings. This assumes that each board member prepares for meetings and reads all minutes and other materials that are distributed in advance. To the maximum extent possible, reports to the board should be prepared and circulated prior to a board meeting and should be presented in a way that focuses the board on the salient issues. Each board member should make an effort to follow and discuss trends relating to [Our Organization]'s work.

The [Our Organization] board is also responsible for determining agency priorities and supporting the chief executive by leading strategic planning efforts.

VI. Fulfill Committee and/or Officer Responsibilities

Each board member should have specific committee and/or officer roles and responsibilities. Each board member is expected to participate in committee meetings and fulfill committee and/or officer responsibilities that are in line with one's own areas of expertise. To the extent possible, board members should assist other committees and participate in the various ad hoc committees and work groups that may be created by the board.

The board is also primarily responsible for its own membership and current members will be asked to recommend, assess, and invite new members when vacancies occur. A strong board recognizes the need to be engaged in recruitment efforts year-round.

VII. Foster Group Cohesiveness

In order to work together as an effective team, every board member should:

1) Accept every other board member with a due appreciation of his or her strengths, a tolerance of his or her quirks and weaknesses, and a respect for his or her differences;

2) Remember that the board as a whole is more important than any of its parts;

3) Make every effort to resolve dissent and discord, or if it cannot be resolved, to keep it in perspective of larger issues; and

4) Accept and conform to the policies and procedures previously established by [Our Organization].

Board members should also take responsibility, both individually and collectively, for the board's overall development. Members should look to improve their own skills and must commit to participating in at least two board development activities each year. These will include at least one retreat to be scheduled by the board chair/president or co-chairs. Board members are also expected to participate in internal needs assessment activities and an annual self and board evaluation process.

Board Member Pledge

I have carefully read and fully understand my responsibilities as a member of the Board of Directors of [Our Organization]. In affixing my signature below, I pledge to fully honor my commitment to the organization during my tenure as a board member and to fulfill the responsibilities and obligations set forth in the "Statement of Board Member Responsibilities," and in [Our Organization]'s board policy manual (if your organization has one).

As a Board Member for [Our Organization], I will:

1) Ensure That [Our Organization] Remains True to Itself and Accountable to the Larger Community;

2) Assume Fiscal and Legal Responsibility;

3) Ensure Adequate Resources;

4) Act as an Ambassador;

5) Actively Participate in Board Meetings;

6) Fulfill Committee and/or Officer Responsibilities; and

7) Work To Foster Group Cohesiveness.

To these ends, I will specifically do the following during_____ (year):

1. Complete the Board Resource Commitment Form (Attached).

2. _____.

3. _____.

4. _____.

In addition, I pledge to seek other means of supporting [Our Organization]'s important work, and will do all that I can to ensure our continuing success.

_____   _____
Board Member   Date

_____   _____
Executive Director   Date

_____   _____
Board Chair   Date

Used with permission from: Individual Giving, by C. Bowman. In M. Garringer (Ed.), *Sustainability Planning and Resource Development for Youth Mentoring Programs*. (Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, National Mentoring Center, 2005, p. 144).

<p align="center">Sample</p>

Board Member Resource Commitment Form

Board Member's Name: _____

[Our Organization] recognizes the many and diverse contributions and skills that its board members give to the organization, including time, talent, and treasure. The organization encourages creative investments and sees them as essential to our growth and sustainability. In addition, [Our Organization] recognizes the importance of board participation in fundraising.

My commitment to [Our Organization] consists of the following pledges:

1. **Personal Gift**

   I will personally invest $_____ in [Our Organization] in 20xx.

   I would like to make this investment in the following manner. I understand that it is beneficial to [Our Organization] to fulfill this pledge before the last month of the fiscal year (_____); and that every board member must make a personal gift according to his or her ability.

   I would like to make my contribution in one payment on: _____, 20xx.

   I would like to make monthly contributions of: $_____, beginning in _____, 20xx.

2. **Raising Money**

   My goal is to raise $_____ (Not my own money) in the following ways.

<p align="center">House Party</p>

   ☐ I will host a fundraising party at my home.

   I will attempt to hold this party in the month of _____, 20xx, in the city of _____ (for regional or national organizations).

   ☐ I will help organize such a party at someone else's home.

<p align="center">Donor Solicitation – Existing Donors</p>

   ☐ I will visit donors to ask them for a gift.

   Number of visits I will make: _____ in 20xx.

   I will make visits in the following geographical area(s) _____

   Will you be traveling this year? (Please use other side if necessary):

   _____

   _____

   _____

☐ If possible, I would like to do one or two visits with an experienced solicitor.

☐ I will call _____ (number) of existing donors to thank them or ask them to renew their pledge. I understand that I may need to call each donor several times in an attempt to have a conversation with him or her.

Donor Solicitation – New Donors

☐ My goal is to bring in _____ new donors.

☐ I will solicit people I know personally who are not already donors to [Our Organization].

Names of people I'd like to solicit with a target gift amount. (Please use other side if necessary. This list will remain confidential):

_____

_____

_____

☐ I will solicit these people through:

    ☐ A Personal Letter
    ☐ An In-Person Meeting
    ☐ A Telephone Call
    ☐ E-mail or Fax

☐ Prospective lists you can share with us for a mailing (clubs, spiritual groups, professional orgs, friends and family, etc.):

_____

_____

_____

Foundation Contacts

☐ I will write letters of support to foundations where I have contacts.

☐ I will meet with foundation officers that I know.

☐ My contacts at foundations include (Please list, even if you think we know):

_____

_____

_____

3. In-Kind Donations

☐ I will make the following in-kind donations (frequent flyer miles are very useful!):

_____

_____

_____

4. Training

☐ I am interested in offering trainings to board and/or staff in the following area(s):

_____

_____

_____

☐ I am interested in receiving training in the following area(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

☐ I will offer my expertise and /or contacts to [Our Organization]'s staff in the following areas (Please include expertise with particular geographic issues and/or community groups, writing articles, editing materials, etc.):

_____

_____

_____

5. Other

☐ I would also like to contribute to [Our Organization] in the following way(s):

_____

_____

_____

Signature:_____ Date: _____

<div align="center">

Sample

Board Self-Assessment Questions

</div>

1. What do you see as the primary responsibilities of a social-profit board member?

2. As a [Our Organization] board member, how would you describe your primary role? Is it consistent with the responsibilities you described in question number one? Are you satisfied with your own level of involvement? How about the board in general?

3. What are your expectations (personally and as a full board) concerning fundraising for the organization? Are you personally committed to supporting the organization financially as well as with your time and talent?

4. In your opinion, what are the primary issues facing [Our Organization] as we move into this year?

5. In your opinion, what is the primary issue facing [Our Organization]'s board of directors this year?

6. What does the board need in order to be more successful? What do you need from staff to support your work?

From time to time, I have worked with the leadership of various social-profit organizations who believe that a weak board will make managing the day-to-day operations easier. They become frustrated when boards require attention and occasionally come to resent the board's role, viewing it as intrusive or meddlesome. These are serious problems.

The health and sustainability of a social-profit organization requires all aspects of the organization to be strong and acting in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities. Your board of directors is an asset that needs attention and protection. You want your board members to feel connected and you want to benefit from the time, talent, and treasure they have to offer.

This information should give you a great starting point into improving your board's role in sustainability planning. Now it's time to identify a starting point and get moving. It really doesn't matter where you choose to begin, only that you do!

Resource Development Planning and Implementation Tools and Tips

- Sustainability Planning Checklist

- Assessing Internal and External Assets: People and Organizations (Example)

- Assessing Internal and External Assets: People and Organizations

- Organizing Results of Internal and External Assessments

- Goals, Objectives, and Activities Worksheet

- Action Plan Tracking Tool

- Holding a Fundraiser: Developing a Plan

- Timeline template

Sustainability Planning Checklist

Preparation

☐ Get approval and buy-in from key decision-makers to engage in your planning process

☐ Identify leadership for the planning effort

☐ Recruit and establish a planning team

☐ Clarify your team's role and scope of their work

Assess the current internal and external factors that effect sustainability

☐ Conduct an internal assessment, including:

   ☐ Goals, objectives, and outcomes to date

   ☐ Current funding, budget, and other resources

   ☐ Organizational capacity and limitations

   ☐ Involvement of Board of Directors or advisory boards

☐ Conduct an assessment of your partnerships, including:

   ☐ Responsibilities of partners

   ☐ Strengths and challenges of partnerships

   ☐ Potential for enhancing existing partnerships

☐ Conduct an assessment of the broader community and record the results

   ☐ Community needs and priorities

   ☐ Current mix of services offered and how your services support them

☐ Potential new partners

☐ Funding resources in your community

☐ Record findings and identify key themes, issues, strengths, and challenges

Develop a lasting plan: the eight steps to sustainability

☐ Know your primary reason for developing resources

☐ Develop and clarify your priorities for ensuring a sustainabile program

☐ Review and understand primary resource development options

☐ Develop goals and measurable objectives based on your assessment and identified priorities

☐ Develop activities with realistic timelines, and assign roles for accountability

☐ Develop a final document

☐ Implement the action plan

☐ Monitor, review, and celebrate your progress

Implement, review, and adjust your plan

☐ Develop a final document and share it with everyone

☐ Monitor your progress and continue to meet with planning team

☐ Adjust and modify the plan as needed

☐ Celebrate and publicize your successes

Assessing Your Assets:
People and Organizations

Skills needed:	Internet research	Events planning
	Grant writing	Direct mail coordination
	PR/marketing	Database development
	Fundraising	Reproduction and mailing
	Desktop publishing and printing coordination	Staffing events
		Other

Board member	Works where	Relevant skills	Community contacts	Availability	Tasks willing to take on	Personal pledge
Jane Deaux	Intel	PR/Market-ing	High-tech industry	2 hrs. a week	Contact corporate giving office	$1,000

Partner agency	Contributions	Amount	Contact
Daisy Hill SD	School grant writer	5 hrs. a month	J.D. McDoogle, Academic VP
	Time at school board to make pitch	once a semester	
	Room for mentors to meet with mentees	up to 20 matches	
	Reproduction facilities		

Staff member	Sustainability-Related Skills/Strengths	% of Time Available
Center director	PR, "schmoozing," building partnerships, board development	20%
Match coordinator	Involving volunteers, public speaking, writing	10%
Secretary	Mass mailing, desktop publishing, managing details	25%

Assessing Your Assets:
People and Organizations

Skills needed:	Internet research Grant writing PR/marketing Fundraising Desktop publishing and printing coordination	Events planning Direct mail coordination Database development Reproduction and mailing Staffing events Other

Board member	Works where	Relevant skills	Community contacts	Availability	Tasks willing to take on	Personal pledge

Partner agency	Contributions	Amount	Contact

Staff member	Sustainability-Related Skills/Strengths	% of Time Available

Assessing Your Current Situation:
Summary of Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities

Internal

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities

Partnerships

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities

Broader Community

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities

Goals, Objectives, and Activities Worksheet

Goal:

Objective 1	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved

Objective 2	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved

Objective 3	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved

Objective 5	Activities To Reach Objective	Timeline	Key Staff Involved

Action Plan Tracking Tool

Instructions: For each objective, enter all activities that have been identified, then enter the specific action steps for each activity, along with the planned timeframe and person responsible. Use as many sheets as necessary to record all activities and action steps.

OBJECTIVE:		

Activity 1:		

Action Steps	Owner	Due Date
a.		
b.		
c.		
d.		
e.		
f.		

OBJECTIVE:		

Activity 2:		

Action Steps	Owner	Due Date
a.		
b.		
c.		
d.		
e.		
f.		

How To Brainstorm

You'll find lots of tips on how to brainstorm, but they all have two things in common: Everyone gets to contribute and no one is allowed to criticize the ideas of others. Below is how a brainstorming session might look:

1. Appoint a facilitator to keep everyone on track.

2. The facilitator will announce the topic and time limit (usually 20–30 minutes).

3. The facilitator will go around the room asking each participant in turn for his or her idea. The facilitator will continue going around the room asking for ideas until everyone passes (or the time limit expires).

4. The facilitator will write down each idea on a marker board, chalkboard, or newsprint. Even silly, outrageous, "off the wall" ideas are okay (they might inspire something useful).

5. No discussion at this stage. Only ideas.

6. No one may comment on anyone else's idea, either pro or con.

7. It's okay to build upon someone else's idea, though.

8. The facilitator works with the group to identify similar ideas and consolidate them.

9. The group discusses the pros and cons of each idea. Those with too many cons are eliminated.

10. The group refines (if necessary) surviving ideas. Maybe some can be combined. Some may inspire new ideas.

11. Incorporate the results into the sustainability plan. Repeat brainstorming as necessary.

Example:

Topic: *How To Raise Money for Our Mentoring Program*

Ideas:

Hire a grant writer to apply for as many grants as possible.

Ask everyone in our community to donate used books, which we can sell at a book fair.

Appoint someone to research foundations that fund mentoring programs.

Find a talented volunteer to design a brochure that tells about how great we are and solicits contributions.

Sell lottery tickets in the community for, say, a TV set or computer that we'll get a local business to donate.

And so on . . .

Multi-Voting: A Group Decision-Making Tool

Your resource development team will encounter a number of moments in the planning process when it will be necessary to evaluate, narrow, and focus the many ideas that have been generated. For example, following a brainstorming session on what your goals are for your resource development plan, you will want to decide on just a few of them in order to focus your efforts.

One useful tool for narrowing a set of ideas is *Multi-Voting*. This technique allows a group to narrow their list or options into a manageable size for sincere consideration or study. It will not help the group make a single decision but can help the group narrow a long list of ideas into a manageable number that can be discussed and explored. It allows all members of the group to be involved in the process and ultimately saves the group a lot of time by allowing them to focus energy on the ideas with the greatest potential.

When To Use Multi-Voting

- When the group has a long list of possibilities and wants to narrow it down to a few for analysis and discussion.

- When a selection process needs to be made after brainstorming.

Drawbacks to Multi-Voting

- It does not guarantee group consensus. Further discussion will be needed to make sure that the entire group can accept the items identified.

- It does not allow much discussion during the voting process to help people make decisions about their votes.

- It does not lend itself to situations where a deeper analysis of the items is needed.

How To Use Multi-Voting

After a brainstorming activity has generated a list of items:

1. ***Review the list from the brainstorming activity.*** Once you have completed the list, clarify ideas, merge similar ideas, and make sure everyone understands the options.

2. ***Participants vote for the ideas that are worthy of further discussion.*** Voting may be by show of hands, a paper ballot, or physically going to the list and marking their choices. Assign a maximum number of votes per person, usually 1/3 of the total number of items to be voted on.

3. ***Identify items for next round of voting.*** Decide in advance how you plan to eliminate items so that everyone is clear. Count the votes for each item and eliminate the items receiving the fewest votes – for example, those receiving less than one-third of the total number of votes.

4. ***Vote again.*** Participants vote again, with a maximum number of votes using the same proportion as the first round (e.g., no more than one-third of total items).

5. ***Repeat the process.*** Participants continue voting and narrowing the options as outlined until there is an appropriate number of ideas for the group to analyze as a part of the decision-making or problem-solving process. Generally groups need to have three to five options for further analysis.

6. ***Discuss remaining ideas.*** At this time the group engages in discussing the pros and cons of the remaining ideas. This may be done in small groups or the group as a whole.

7. ***Proceed with appropriate actions.*** At this point the group goes to the next steps. This might be making a choice of the best option or identifying the top priorities

Holding a Fundraiser: Developing a Plan

Special events should be part of your strategy for developing a balanced, diversified base of funding. When properly planned and implemented, special events can accomplish several key objectives. They can:

■ Involve volunteers productively with your program

■ Raise the visibility and expand the constituency of your program, leading, in turn, to opportunities for additional fundraising and volunteer recruitment

■ Bring in significant amounts of money

Do not, however, try to use special events as a quick fix for cash shortages. When hurriedly planned, special events can lead to disappointing results and disillusioned volunteers; produce a disappointing return on your investment of extensive time, effort, and money; and be all-consuming, distracting staff and volunteers from program activities and other, potentially more cost-effective fundraising efforts.

The Planning Process

The key to a successful event is careful planning. For a major fundraiser, it is a good idea to begin at least 12 months in advance. To develop and implement a comprehensive plan, you can follow this process.

Select the event

1. Decide on your primary objectives for the event. Are they:

   ■ To gain publicity for your program?

   ■ To provide an opportunity for your current constituency to feel connected to the program?

■ To enlarge your constituency?

■ To raise significant amounts of money?

2. Brainstorm ideas for potential events that are likely to meet your objectives. To be successful, it is best to be original, or to be innovative with borrowed ideas. Examples of kinds of events include:

   Auctions
   Raffles
   Haunted houses
   Fashion shows
   Movie screenings or theater parties
   Bowling or golf tournaments
   Marathons/walk-a-thons/bike-a-thons
   Tributes to community leaders
   Tributes to unsung heroes
   Dinners
   Dances
   Concerts/performances

3. Ask yourself these questions:

   ■ Will the event appeal to the constituency you are trying to attract?

   ■ Are the logistics of the event doable?

   ■ Do you have the people power to plan the event and make it a success?

   ■ Will the cost-benefit of the event be meaningful enough to motivate volunteers to participate in the planning and implementation?

   ■ Is it the kind of event that can be repeated in the future? If it is repeated, are there opportunities for it to grow?

Develop a formal plan

1. Select a competent, committed person to chair the event.

2. Develop a full description of the event—how it should look and feel. (Be sure that donor and volunteer recognition are part of the event.)

3. Set a specific goal for how much money the event should raise.

4. Select a date for the event. Consult community calendars to learn what other events are planned around that date; your own organization's calendar; and the availability of the event site. Consider travel patterns of the people you want to attend. For example, if you plan the event for a weekend afternoon in the summer, are people likely to be away at the beach?

5. Develop a master checklist of tasks and a calendar of when they must be completed. Organize committees to complete the tasks. Be sure each committee has clear responsibilities and timelines. Recruit committee members from within and outside your organization.

6. Expect the unexpected. Prepare for it by developing a contingency plan. For example, if it is an outdoor event, what will you do if it rains? If you are honoring a community leader, what will you do if he or she cancels at the last minute?

Prepare a budget

Budget categories might include:

> Facility rental
> Food service
> Decorations
> Equipment rental

Entertainment
Publicity
Design and printing
Postage
Prizes and recognition items
Office expenses
Insurance
Miscellaneous

1. Be attentive to cost control. Set up budget controls and reporting procedures.

2. Be realistic. If this is a first-time event, it may do little more than break even. But it may be worth repeating if the response was positive and you can identify strategies for growth.

3. Try to have major costs underwritten. This is a key to maximizing profits. For example, look for business sponsorship to cover publicity and printing costs. When you approach a business to ask for sponsorship, be sure you can tell them what they will receive in return (for example, positive visibility in the community).

Evaluate the outcomes of the event

The evaluation will serve at least three purposes. It will:

1. Provide hard facts (for example, on attendance and money raised) that let you know if you made strong decisions in planning and implementing the event

2. Help you determine whether you should hold the event again

3. Provide a springboard for an improved event if you decide to hold it again

Keep in mind that doing an event the first time is much more time-consuming and often less profitable than a repeat performance.

Template

Fundraising Timeline

	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

APPENDIX C

Resources and References

- Online Resources for Sustainability

- Print Resources and Cited References

The online and print resources are recommended based on three criteria: the authors have found them to be as up to date as possible; they are relatively user friendly; and they are easily found. However, new resources on sustainability are continually appearing and existing ones updated. Use these for what they are: a starting point.

Online Resources for Sustainability

America's Promise offers templates and sample documents to assist you with every phase of your corporate engagement efforts. They're designed to be downloaded and customized with your specific information.

http://www.americaspromise.org/community/corptoolkit/tools.cfm

American Association of Fundraising Counsel promotes and supports ethics, excellence, and leadership in advancing philanthropy. It also has a private foundation that publishes an annual report called Giving USA and keeps track of philanthropic news and trends.

http://www.aafrc.org

Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) promotes best practices in the field of philanthropy. Its Web site has useful information on all kinds of resource development strategies.

http://www.afpnet.org/index.cfm

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance is a searchable database that lists all federal funding opportunities, including some that are anticipated to be funded. Also provided are links to other government sites and tips on grant writing.

http://www.cfda.gov

The Chronicle of Philanthropy's guide to grants, including an electronic database (fee required for use) of corporate and foundation grants.

http://philanthropy.com/

Coalition for Community Schools advocates for community schools as the vehicle for strengthening schools, families, and communities. Their Web site includes a great page on funding collaborative school-community programs, with links to additional online resources.

http://www.communityschools.org/funding.html

Common Ground Consulting offers numerous resources for mentoring programs and other social-profit organizations, including downloadable board development and sustainability planning tools, articles, and links to other sites.

http://consultcommonground.com/index.cfm

The Finance Project is a nonprofit research, consulting, technical assistance, and training firm for public and private sector leaders. Their Information Resource Center has useful resources on sustainability planning, including a five-module workbook and an in-depth training institute.

http://www.financeproject.org/irc/sustainability.asp

The Foundation Center has fundraising information and links to the sites of hundreds of grant makers. The site has a searchable online database (fee required for use) and offers workshops in grant writing and other services.

http://www.fdncenter.org

Fundsnet Online Services has access to hundreds of resources, including links to grant makers and a useful tool to find foundations by state.

http://www.fundsnetservices.com

Grants.gov allows organizations to electronically find and apply for current competitive grant opportunities from all federal grant-making agencies. Grants.gov is the single access point for more than 900 grant programs offered by the 26 federal grant-making agencies.

http://www.grants.gov

The Grantsmanship Center offers workshops in grantsmanship, fundraising publications, a free newsletter, a link to the daily digest of grant opportunities from the Federal Register, and state-by-state information on public and private funding sources.

http://www.tgci.com

Philanthropy News Network Online is a daily online news service that reports on nonprofit agencies and philanthropy.

http://www.pnnonline.org

Print Resources and Cited References

Resources in the NMC Library (available for interlibrary loan)

Foundation Fundamentals: A Guide for Grant-seekers, edited by K. Schladweiler (New York, NY: Foundation Center, 2004, 7th ed.). A comprehensive guide to identifying and cultivating foundation and corporate funding. Includes historical information on foundations, information on Internet searches, presentation strategies, planning tools and lists of fundraising resources.

Fundraising for the Long Haul, by K. Klein (Berkeley, CA: Chardon Press, 2000). An excellent resource on developing a comprehensive fundraising strategy for any grassroots organization.

Fundraising on the Internet: The e-PhilanthropyFoundation.org's Guide to Success Online, edited by M. Warwick, T. Hart, and N. Allen (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002, 2nd ed.). This covers the basics of online fundraising and also covers more advanced topics such as developing effective web content for repeat visitors, conducting advocacy campaigns, and utilizing charity portals. An outstanding resource for programs seeking to implement online fundraising.

Fundraising Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards, by J.M. Greenfield (Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2003). A brief guide to the role of boards in fundraising and sustainability planning.

Secrets of Successful Fundraising: The Best from the Non-Profit Pros, edited by C. Weisman (St. Louis, MO: F.E. Robbins & Sons Press, 2000). Fundraising tips from 19 nonprofit consultants and leaders on topics such as planned giving, hiring consultants, direct mail, grants, corporate giving, internet fundraising, and donor recognition.

Downloadable Resources

Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives, by H.C. Padgett (Washington, DC: Finance Project, 2003, Rev. ed.). A comprehensive resource on finding federal funding with useful tips any program will find useful.

http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/FundingGuide2003.pdf

Show Us the Money! Fundraising Fundamentals for Mentoring Programs, by B.E. Webster (Folsom, CA: EMT Associates, 2001).

http://emt.org/userfiles/showUsSeries3.pdf

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Westat, Inc. (2001). *Giving and Volunteering in the United States, 2001: Findings from a national survey*. Washington, DC: Independent Sector.

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