



Micro Project Topics 2022-23

The services offered here are associated with the preliminary data collection stage of a traditional Compass project. They consist of stakeholder interviews, focus groups, client surveys, literature searches, subject matter expert interviews, interviews of 'leaders in the field' for best practices, and analysis of specific data either collected or already in house. The deliverable will typically be the results of analysis of this preliminary data with 'next step' recommendations.

I) BOARD DEVELOPMENT

a) Board Gap Analysis and Performance Assessment

Survey and interview the board of directors to identify gaps in skills, industry expertise, board expertise, satisfaction with board performance, and opportunities for improvement.

b) Board Structure and Organization

Review the board's organization, structure, roles and responsibilities, accountabilities, processes, and goal setting. Review by-laws and board's policies and procedures. Make recommendations for further development.

c) Organizational Performance Evaluation and Goal Setting

Help the board with annual goal setting for the organization as a whole, for programs and processes, and for key staff, including performance evaluation processes. Review/update the position descriptions of the ED and senior staff as needed.

d) Dashboards/Performance Metrics/Best Practices for Industry Segment

Survey comparable organizations and available literature to identify the best practices in performance evaluation and measurement. Help the nonprofit develop performance metrics, at a high level, that are appropriate to its needs and consistent with best practices.

II) FUNDING STRATEGY

a) Funding Sources and Uses Analysis

Are you overly dependent on any particular source of funds? What opportunities exist for diversification, if any? Review how comparable organizations and competitors are raising funds. What investment is required to generate a specific new funding source?

b) ROI for Various Initiatives (mailing, events, programs)

Analyze the cost effectiveness of various fund-raising strategies. Does a strategy produce a positive ROI? If not, are there strategic reasons to continue? How effective are certain

fundraising strategies with particular donor groups? What kind of analysis should the client be performing regularly to ensure that fundraising dollars are devoted to the best possible use?

c) Conversion Rates for Small Donors

Analyze the donor population. Which demographic groups or types of donors are most likely to be converted to a higher level of support? Who leaves and why?

d) Cultivation Strategies to Increase Donor Contributions

Focus groups with donors. What benefits are most attractive to a specific donor population to ensure renewed subscriptions and/or increased support. Best practices used by comparable organizations. Identify which benefits are most attractive to specific donor demographics.

e) Best Practices in Funding Strategies

Literature and Internet search for best practices, innovative approaches. Interview subject matter experts and 'best in field' organizations for new opportunities.

f) Board Role: Fundraising Best Practices

Define the roles and responsibilities of the Board's Development Committee, its relationship with a Director of Development and fundraising staff, shared goal setting, Give or Get requirements. Educate board members to be spokespeople for the organization.

III) NEW VENTURES

a) New Program Growth or Start-Up Evaluation

Evaluate a proposed earned income venture or a new program. The team will gather the data and conduct the analysis to assess the feasibility of a new initiative. This may include market and competitive research, financial modeling, and an examination of strategic, organizational, and operational considerations that leadership would need to make a more informed decision about moving forward.

IV) STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

a) Stakeholder Interviews: Mission and Vision Development

Interview organizational stakeholders regarding the organization's mission and values. Perform a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis as a key input into a strategic planning process.

b) Client Satisfaction Survey/Focus Groups

Survey the nonprofit's client population regarding satisfaction with services received and/or conduct focus groups to identify areas for program improvement or opportunities to provide additional or modified services.

c) Program ROI, Budgeting

Review sources and uses of revenues for specific programs and identify which programs are net sources of revenue and which are net users, or when a specific investment will break even. Budgeting would be involved when multiple programs or 'activities' are being run without a break-out of the costs and revenues specific to a program, including the appropriate allocation of overhead.

d) Best Practices in Specific Area of Program Management

Review identified aspect of a program with strategic considerations and examine how competitors or other comparable nonprofits engage in this aspect of program management.

e) Program Impact

Review existing program metrics. Identify new or enhanced metrics that are most consistent with the organization's stated strategic objectives, potentially including a review of the information systems currently in use.

f) Performance Evaluation, Feedback and Development for Staff

Review processes for employee position posting, hiring, orientation, setting expectations, training, providing feedback, and receiving employee input on the above. Ensure that the organization is taking appropriate steps to get the right person in the right job, ensure that they are trained and acculturated properly, and avoid non-performance issues.

g) Job Descriptions and Goal Setting/Evaluation for Senior Staff

Review position descriptions, organization structure, scope of responsibility, and goal setting for senior staff positions.

h) Partnership Analysis

Develop a SWOT analysis of your organization and prospective partner(s). Look at risks and opportunities associated with the partnership. Assess potential costs and make a recommendation on whether to pursue a partnership.

i) Partnership Opportunities

Identification and initial screening of potential partnership opportunities.

V) STRATEGIC MARKETING

a) Branding and Positioning

Evaluate and enhance Brand definition and messaging. Recommend ways to increase awareness among target populations. Review communications, public relations, and marketing content to ensure all are aligned with new brand and reinforce the mission.

b) Creating a Marketing Roadmap

Develop a strategic marketing roadmap for a specific program or organizational priority. Provide recommended tactics to achieve identified goal (e.g. educating clients regarding program services, reaching new audiences, increasing participants, etc.).

c) Marketing Budget Assessment

Establish measures that assess the ROI on current marketing and provide insight to inform the best way to utilize marketing budget.

d) Digital and Social Media Strategy

Increase or strengthen digital and social media marketing. Recommend digital strategies to build awareness and maximize engagement.

VI) TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

a) Using Data for Decision-Making

Assess how data collection processes, tools, and analysis can better support decision-making in areas such as financial management and reporting, managing volunteers, clients, donors, or other internal areas. Research tools that visually show results of data collected.

b) Making the Most of Existing Technology

Assess existing technology capabilities and recommend a strategy for more effectively using existing technology to support the organization's strategic goals or to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Evaluate technology's impact on people and processes.

c) Assessing Organizational Technology

Analyze existing technology capabilities throughout the organization. Determine opportunities to use new or different technology to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Prioritize technology options. Create a timeline for implementing new technology while taking into account the organization's goals and resources.

d) New Digital Solution for Program or Function

Assess a program area or key function (e.g., finance, development, etc.) and provide recommendations for technology that could improve efficiency, effectiveness and/or reduce costs.