CHAPTER 1

This guide will walk you through the stepladder planning process and provide you with a variety of exercises to increase your chances of getting a grant funded. First, we will identify useful strategies and the focus of your project. Next, we will explore how collaboration and networking make the difference between a successful and unsuccessful proposal. Once we have laid the groundwork for our plan, we will explore the stepladder model — an easy-to-use approach that helps you effortlessly write your proposal. Lastly, we will address how to transform your ladder's outline into a solid proposal, by combining components and using best practices.

Let's get started!

What is a proposal?

A proposal is the description of your planned program with details about how you will accomplish it. The proposal generally consists of 1) an abstract — a general summary of the program highlighting the exciting parts; 2) an introduction — who you are, what your organization does, and why you are able to realize results (This is also your credibility statement.); 3) a needs statement —frames the issues for the potential sponsor; 4) the goals — a broad statement of what you plan to accomplish; 5) the objectives — specific aims that you intend to accomplish within the scaffolding of the goal; 6) the methods — the specific steps that need to be employed to reach your objectives; 7) the evaluation — demonstrates how the program accomplished what you set out to do or how it needs to be changed; and 8) the budget — the costs associated with achieving the setup and execution of the proposed program.

Keep in mind that the heart of your proposal is your program plan. If you have a solid program, you are sure to design a successful proposal.

The planning of a proposal, with a focus on program planning, will be the focus of the chapters to come. The stepladder will help us create a framework for goals, objectives, the program plan, and evaluation, leaving us with an outline for our full proposal. Once you complete the steps in this book, writing the proposal will be a simple construction based on that outline.

Tip Box One

Parts of the Proposal

- **Abstract – Summary of the program plan**
- **Introduction – Credibility statement of who you are**
- **Needs Statement – Explain why this program will make a difference**
- **Goals/Objectives – Specific aims of the program plan**
- **Methods – The "how to" of the program plan**
- **Evaluation – The post analysis of the program plan**
- **Budget – The financials for program operation**

Planning with credibility

In addition to being organized and focused, credibility is central to the planning process. Having, borrowing or creating credibility must be achieved during the planning phase for the proposal. One of my favorite movies illustrates the importance of credibility in project planning. In the movie There's *Something about Mary*, the main character, Ted, is a nice guy who is traveling from his home to try and win the affections of a former girlfriend. Along the way, he picks up a hitchhiker, who proceeds to tell Ted about his plan to make millions of dollars. Our hero is polite, and despite his apparent lack of interest, says he'd like to hear the plan. The hitchhiker alludes to the infomercial for "Eight Minute Abs," then looks very seriously at Ted and tells him he is going to do even better by offering "Seven Minute Abs."

Though obviously amusing, there is no value in altering the product in this way. What it shows us, however, is how easy it is to lose your credibility. As soon as he has explained that he plans merely to duplicate an existing service, and not terribly well, viewers, as well as Ted, realize that this guy is a bit off. The same can be true if your plan is not well researched. If you don't thoroughly organize the details, it is easy to make statements that unwittingly cause you to lose credibility.

Credibility is essential for building collaborations, getting funded and creating opportunity. Your plan will serve as your preliminary credibility and will be enhanced by the research, partners and general support you receive along the way.

Credibility is not always available to us, particularly if we lack certain skills or resources. Sometimes we have to borrow credibility as part of the overall planning process. Borrowing credibility means using evidence of another's success or partnering with someone who has more expertise or experience in your particular arena.

In my experience, I worked for the City of Cleveland, writing grants for the recreation department. We had great space at our recreation centers and wanted to help our communities by building stronger relationships with the families and schools. We explored many ideas and ultimately chose to create an after-school computer program. As it turned out, we had donated computers at the center, and initially thought all we needed were the kids and the funding for materials and staff. However, as we went through the planning process, we realized we had no history of running after-school programs, nor had we offered any academic programming. Thus, when we were asking for funding and beginning the outline for our plan, we realized we needed partners who could loan us their credibility. We ended up doing the project, receiving funding, and borrowing credibility from our local YMCA (who had great after-school programs, but not in this area) and some folks from a local elementary school.

It was a win-win situation for all involved. The YMCA was looking to create more inner-city programs in areas it was not currently serving, and the school loved the opportunity to have students complete their homework and become more computer savvy in a new environment, thus enhancing the kids' support network and improving their chances for success. As you prepare to create your plan and build your stepladder, an awareness of the importance of credibility will go a long way toward getting funded and making the program a success. Ultimately, credibility will be an underlying presence throughout your proposal, and it will have practical use in your cover letter, program plan and budget.

Tip Box Two

Credibility

Credibility is an essential ingredient in receiving funding. Credibility can be created or borrowed, or highlighted when it already exists.

1. **Borrowed Credibility – Partnering with established organizations of area expertise for a project.**
2. **Created Credibility – A sound plan that outlines all the various components you intend to use and the process you use to achieve it.**
3. **Highlighted Credibility – Use your plan and your proposal to show the history and work of your agency, school, organization… that provides an illustration of the depth, knowledge and understanding in that given area.**

Using strategy to build a great proposal

A number of strategies can be used enhance your planning efforts. First, let's be clear on what a strategy is and how to use one to maximize your chances for success. I am sure that you employ many strategies every day for your students, without even thinking about them. The elementary teacher may give kids stickers for being good listeners. The sticker serves as a motivator for the student to follow directions. This is a strategy for classroom management. The goal of this technique is to create an environment where students feel connected and safe, and can focus on their learning. In middle school, staff may use drama as a strategy to teach various literacy skills. Again, the dramatization of a given scene from a story may help students gain a deeper understanding of the various characters' points of view and the setting. In this case, the student may be forced to think about a character's circumstances in a different light, or appreciate what the author was trying to accomplish from a different vantage point.

Similarly, a winning strategy for proposal planning is to create a plan that addresses as many perspectives as possible while scrutinizing potential problems that may crop up. The baseball player who suddenly can't hit a ball needs concrete strategies to help him learn how to connect with the bat. As we move on, the stepladder and questions in the coming chapters will serve as effective strategies in the program planning process.

CHAPTER 2

All the words you learned in 2nd grade...

This next section examines the questions the planner needs to ask and keep in mind throughout the entire process: who, what, when, why, where and how. When creating a plan each phase needs to be explored in detail. If you don't work through the answers ahead of time, you can guarantee the funding agency or someone in your organization will find the hole you haven't plugged. Even worse, you could end up being the star of your own version of the book, *If you Give a Mouse a Cookie*, by Laura Numeroff. In this book, had the little boy thought of all the things that could happen after giving the mouse a cookie, he might not have been cleaning up a huge mess by the end of the book.

Keep that little boy and mouse in mind. Your proposal will have great strength if you are able to anticipate and plan for any practical issues that you can conceive as impacting your program. Remember, funders will scrutinize your proposal and look for only the most comprehensive plans. You probably learned the five W's and an H in high school, but they will help you to prepare a strong program plan and anticipate issues critical to its ability to succeed. Your final proposal will incorporate many of the answers to these questions.

Each step of the way, the "who" defines the group of actors in your production. As you write your plan you need to be cognizant of all the players and their responsibilities. Questions that may arise at each step include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Who is in charge of the project?
- Who is responsible for the individual components?
- Who are the partners?
- Who will handle problems when they arise?
- Who will participate in the program?
- Who will support the program?
- Who can offer additional resources that aren't on the table?
- Who will be good to use when building credibility?
- Who else has done this or something similar?

The next question to be answered when planning your program is what. The "what" is the meat of the process; it asks all the details of a given moment.

- What are the constraints of each step?
- What is next?
- What if something unexpected happens?
- What are other programs in the area doing: the same thing or something similar?
- What does each of the partners need to keep them happy?
- What are the issues in the community that our program can impact?
- What is the potential success rate of doing this work?
- What are the protocols for each step?
- What is the chain of command?

The next question examines the time frame, or when. Understanding the time frame and sequence will help you plan the what, who and where, while preparing for the final steps in the process.

- When will the project take place?
- When will you evaluate your work?

- When will you involve the partners?
- When will you identify the stakeholders?
- When will you end the program?
- When will you market the plan?
- When will you do each step?
- When will you determine if something is failing and make changes?
- When will you look for funding?

The next question is the why. You must clearly identify the goal and objectives of the plan to give the why a solid foundation.

- Why are you doing this project?
- Why are you involving the various partners?
- Why have you included each step along the way?
- Why did you choose the given time frame?
- Why did you choose the given staff?
- Why did you choose the location?
- Why did you choose the supplies you are using?
- Why did you choose the programs which serve as models for your work?
- Why is your plan cost-effective?

The next question addresses location, an always important component of the plan. "Where" is a possible solution to rebuilding communities. There is a whole set of theories on the concept of people vs. place when discussing the issues that plague our communities and the ways to solve problems.

- Where will the program take place?
- Where will the support agencies be located?
- Where will you locate the staff that runs the program?
- Where will you find its participants?
- Where will each component of the program take place?
- Where will you find support from the community?
- Where are good examples of similar programs in similar locations that have been successful?
- Where will there be support for the program if problems occur?
- Where will the dollars for the program be channeled?

The last question that needs to be addressed is how, as in how can the plan come to fruition. The "how" is really the method in which the program will be developed. It is the fine-tuning and the director of the questions.

- How will each step be accomplished?
- How will staff work within each step?
- How will staff address issues within the program?
- How will staff involve all the partners?
- How will the program be evaluated?
- How will the program produce its given goals?
- How will each agency play a role and divide the labor and costs associated?
- How will success be acknowledged?
- How will each person feel valued in the process?

These are some of the questions that you will need to ask as you begin to plan your program. They will be a good step in understanding how the frames in the sequence of the plan will effectively enhance one another and build the program in the intended fashion.

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Tip Box Three

Who, What, When, Why, Where and How

Who – Who are the players involved (Staff, Partners, Participants…)?
What – What is the process (General steps)? What if (Potential issues)?
When – When will this happen (Time frame)?
Why – Why is this worthwhile (Rationale behind each step)?
Where- Where will the program/dollars be located (Place and Power)?
How – How will this get done (Method)?

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Exercise One

Before we start looking at the next guiding principles for a successful proposal, let's practice what we've covered by thinking about credibility, perspective and questions for a plan. I am going to use a well-known story to illustrate how perspective can be different and can impact the way in which a program can be conceived, interpreted and developed. Please consider perspective, and jot down several ideas for programs that may help our protagonist. Also, refer to the questions below, and write two of your own that you might ask while planning this program.

Story…

There was a 10-year-old girl who didn't want to go to school one day. They were having a math test and she had never loved math. So she bade her mother goodbye and left on her way, heading through the forest to the Story Book Elementary School. But instead of turning right at the old oak tree, she made a left and headed down the path to the bear village. She had heard this was a good place to get free food and play hooky without getting caught.

So off she went to the village, and with great luck she came upon a cottage that looked like the perfect hideout. She knocked, and when no one answered, she opened the door and went in to find the house empty. She was delighted. Not only was it empty, but food was out for her. She had a great time eating her favorite breakfast cereal, playing video games in a small rocking chair (which she broke when she lost), and finally falling asleep in a bed upstairs. She thought she had gotten away with skipping school and having a great time in bear village, when she awoke to the family of bears that lived in the home.

- What type of program can you create for the 10-year-old?
- Who can be the partners?
- Please come up with two of each of the following questions: who, what, when, why, where and how.

My Thoughts…

- The program I created was the Bear All Youth (BAY). BAY is a program that works with truant kids; it helps them identify their issues and assigns a caseworker to address

each problem. It is for kids who do not have a long history of truancy and volunteer for this instead of other punishments associated with being truant.
- Partners include the Robin Hood Court, Jack and the Beanstalk Recreational Therapy Center, and the Storybook Elementary School District.

Questions for program planning: who, what, when, why, where and how.
- Who will be the lead agency?
- Who will be in charge of the youth?
- What will the students have to do in the program?
- What if the students don't show up for the program several times?
- When will they be finished with the program?
- When will follow up occur?
- Why will this program work?
- Why was each partner chosen to be involved?
- Where will the program be located?
- Where will the dollars go through?
- How will the program be evaluated?
- How many students will they take?

These are just some ideas for programs and questions on their potential. Remember, perspective and credibility impact potential funding. Asking the right questions leads to a successful plan. Prepare and analyze all the components we discussed, and you'll have a strong foundation for your winning proposal.

CHAPTER 3

The stepladder model rationale

The stepladder is just as it sounds; it is a strategy to define each step within the program. Each rung acts as a step toward completing a plan for the program. Your model generally will be between six and seven steps, and each outside step will be accompanied by an inside explanation. Breaking down the program process into multiple steps in advance will give you a good grasp of all you will need to do to achieve your program. This approach will help you assemble a powerful plan that will translate easily into the actual proposal.
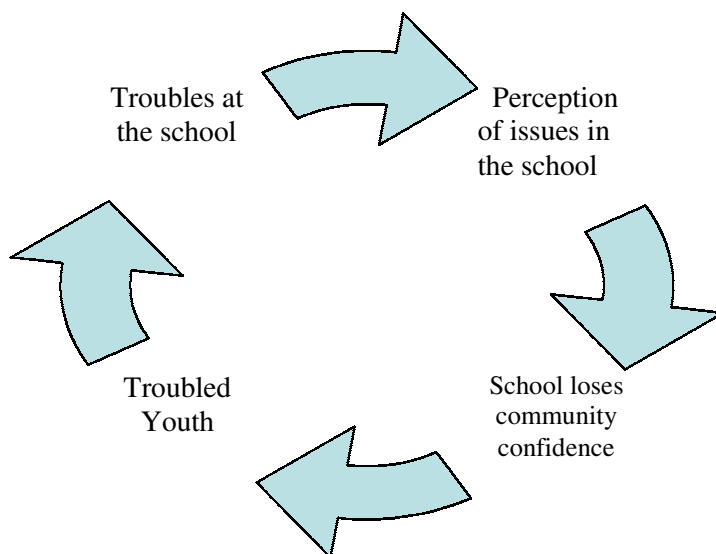

Cocktail conversation

One of the key aspects of grant writing as related to proposal planning is the creation of the "cocktail conversation" about your idea (i.e., program plan). By creating a quick-to-the-point discussion about your program, that is sexy and concise, you can bring others into your network early, involve them in the process, and increase your chances of winning funding for your project. The cocktail conversation is designed to discuss three quick points about your program. Most people are able to remember three related ideas, and for the most part, even if the person isn't a good listener you may be able to invest them with these animated convictions. We have all been caught in a situation where someone is going into detail about a current project. They may see it as highly interesting, but you are dying to get away from the exceedingly technical and monotonous conversation. Remember these people! You never want to become someone to avoid in the future or build a reputation as someone to dodge.

Using the cocktail conversation, you can begin by introducing an interesting problem or statistic that will engage your listener. Once you have hooked them with your initial fact, try to tie their self-interest to the situation. When we think about self-interest, there are general topics that interest almost everyone. Helping disturbed kids may seem like a nice idea, but if the person doesn't know any disturbed kids or believes it is not his problem, then his buy-in will be minimal. However, if you can tie it into something more global that will impact him, then you may succeed in attracting an important partner. For example, you may get the listener to think in terms of the

damage that disturbed kids can do if they aren't helped. This damage can have an impact on the reputation of a school or district and the perception of a neighborhood. This perception can have a significant effect on the value of local property. If the school system is deemed troubled, then the value of the surrounding property is reduced. This global thinking, along with being able to frame your program in a way that seems like a natural solution to a basic issue in the community, will help you gain credibility and partnership in your planning and implementation of the grant.

Troubles at
the school

Perception
of issues in
the school

Troubled
Youth

School loses
community
confidence

The other part of the cocktail conversation is a few inviting details about how you envision the program. You see troubled youth assigned mentors who help them develop a project that they can market. Perhaps they will start a T-shirt design business, a candy gram for teens, or a tie-dye business. This is enough detail to bring your listener in and give him the choice of engaging further.

Exercises Two

Please write three points about the following idea.
Idea: Creating a Teen Center (located at the school) for youth from 3-6 p.m.
- Fact _____
- Self-interest tie _____
- Program details _____

My Thoughts…

The answer that I have given here is one of many options. It could be improved upon, and it doesn't hurt to have a backup fact just in case the listener increases his interest based on what you are saying.
- Fact: Most teens who get pregnant, take drugs, or engage in other antisocial behavior do it between 3-6 p.m.
- Self-interest tie: Higher rates of teen pregnancy and crime are ultimately paid for by the taxpayer.
- Program details: The program participants will meet daily, and kids will get to take a field trip of their choice at the end of the month. Kids will have the option of earning

money by working with the business sector, studying with a tutor, or engaging in teen activities.

The cocktail conversation is an excellent way to expand your network, enlist the help of others, and achieve buy-in from the community. It is also an excellent vehicle for talking with potential funders about your project. I was once discussing a need for jerseys with a parent on my Little League girls' basketball team. I explained to her how it built confidence, showed unity, and created pride with the kids, but that we were short on funding to get these jerseys. I discovered that she worked for a corporation, and through her connections, she was able to get her corporation to fund our uniforms, as well as all the uniforms for the recreation center. Again, by getting the word out, talking to as many people as possible, and using my cocktail conversation, I was able to intrigue and win over support. The same is true for you; perhaps a parent from school or family friend may be interested in helping, but you will never know if you don't get the word out.

Tip Box Four

Cocktail Conversation

1. **Fact – Give an interesting fact/statistic about the "given issue."**
2. **Self-Interest – Tie the issue to a global concern or a basic human need that impacts us all.**
3. **Program Details – Choose good details about the program that will invite the listener to ask more questions and become engaged**.

Building partnerships

Collaboration is crucial in the planning process and will be one of the essential building blocks for a successful proposal. The stronger your proposal is, the more likely it will be to get funded. Funders love partnerships since they represent the service of a greater number of people and consequently less duplication of funding dollars. It is tempting to tackle a project alone, and working with others can be a challenge. However, the payoff can be terrific. As you seek to build these partnerships, it helps look outside the box and be creative.

You increase your funding opportunity significantly by knowing who your potential partners are and what they can bring to the table. This is the last step we have to think about before we begin our stepladder model. There are two ways to start this process. One is to identify all the organizations and agencies within your community that can assist in the process, give you increased credibility, and build on your existing assets, prior to receiving any type of funding. Creating this list will give you a grouping from which to work. Please use the chart below to prioritize your thinking and list these potential partners.

Potential Potential Partner	What DO What Do they bring to the table?	What can What can you offer them?	What DO you What Do You want their role to be within the project?	Do you know anyone at the organization?

In addition to thinking about partners that would be an asset to your project, it is also valuable to contemplate who you already know that could offer resources necessary for your project. Often, we have valuable contacts right in front of us who can assist us in our work. Remember, foundations and corporations want to get the biggest bang for their buck, so the more people who are served, involved and touched by the project on some level, the greater value to the community.

Networks and assets

Another way to develop partnerships is to assess your current networks and assets. Here is an exercise I like to use: Draw a circle and put yourself in the center. Then think about all the connections that you have in your life. Use these for each circle, and under each name contacts that you think could be of value to your project. You'll be surprised how many resources you have at your fingertips.
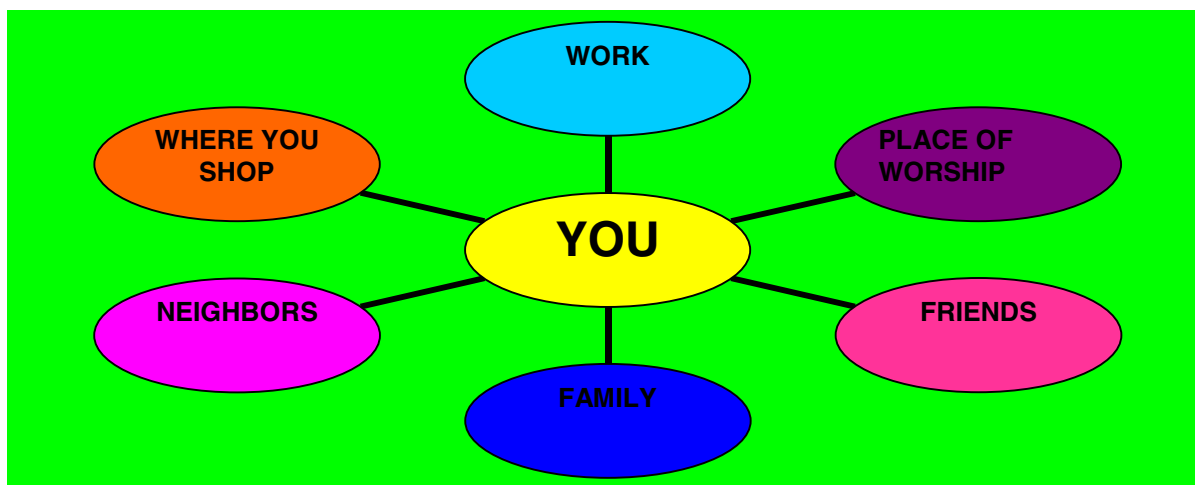
In addition to being conscious of who you know and how they can facilitate support for the project, it is important to take an inventory of your organization's assets. Knowing what you bring to the table and willing to offer shows your commitment to the project. Take a look at the following example. It's an in-kind contribution (something that you have already that does not require an outward expense) for a project budget. Let's say that you are going to have a Thanksgiving dinner for all the community members that have helped make your mentoring program a success in the past six months. By assessing what resources are already available, you can determine what you really need to complete your dinner.

Let's consider all the things that you may need for the dinner, and we will be aware of all that we already have.

Items Needed	Details	What We Have
Party Room	2 Tables for a total of 10	have
Turkey	Pan, Oven, Cooking Utensils	
Spices	6 different kinds, Salt	have
Table Cloths	2 round tables	have
Drinks	Enough for 10 people	
Potatoes	Pot to boil, Utensils for Making Mashed Potatoes	have
Milk	For Mashed Potatoes	
Butter	8 Sticks	
Green beans	3 Pkgs.	
Cranberry sauce	4 Jars	
Pumpkin Pie	2 from Bakery	
Apple Pie	1 from Bakery	
Ice Cream	1 Gallon	
Coffee	Enough for 2 pots	have
Cream	Enough for Coffee	have
Sugar	Enough for Coffee	have
Flowers	2 Packages	
Paper products and Utensils	Enough for 10 people	have
Cleaning Supplies	For before and after the party	have
Invitations	Make on the computer	have
Awards	Make on the computer	have

In this case, we come to the table with a lot of the items we need for this project. When we go to make our plan, we can look at what already exists and show that we can offer something toward the total need of the project. This will go a long way with potential funding agencies and collaborators. It shows an investment on our behalf, which lets the others involved know that we are serious about the project.

Exercise Three

Consider the example provided. In this case, the school district is offering its facility, buses, computers and fiscal expertise for the project. These assets go a long way in terms of building a program. Understanding that these items are available prior to creating a plan will assist you in having realistic expectations and creating a plan that can be implemented with the most resources possible.
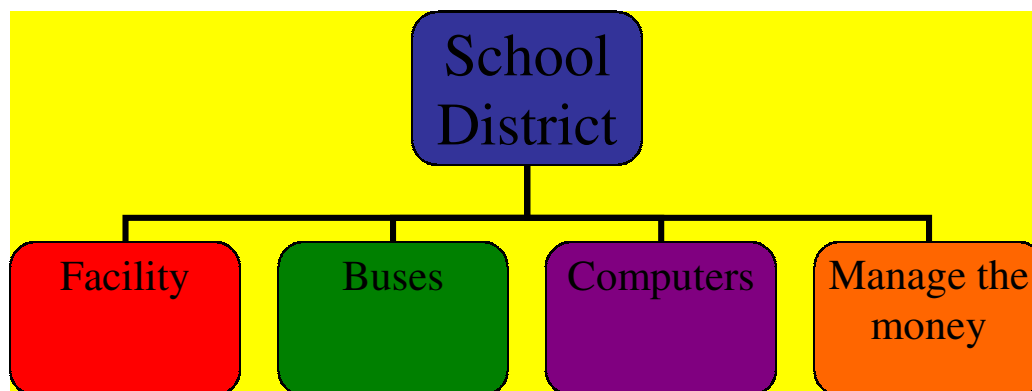
Now think about the program you want to create. Draw a box at the top center of a piece of paper. Use the top box to identify your agency or individuals involved. Draw a line straight down from the top box and then branch out to lower boxes, filling in the bottom boxes with resources your organization and individuals can bring to the table. What resources do you possess that you may not have considered before?

Reviewing your networks and assets beforehand will have a significant impact on your overall proposal. Crafting your proposal to reflect the tremendous benefit your partnerships provide will enhance the proposal's value in the eyes of future funders.

Tip Box Five

Networks and Asset Identification

Networks – Looking to whom you know to provide support for the project as well as filling the role of increasing project sustainability and collaboration.

Asset Identification – What do you or your partners already have that you can bring to the table.

CHAPTER 4

You are writing a proposal because you want to do something good with a funder's money. It is your chance to let people see what wonderful work their contributions will bring to life. This chapter will focus on how to create a program that will turn heads and stop traffic. The program will be the very heart of your proposal, keep the overall vision in mind, along with a strong defined goal and objective.

Developing a program begins by brainstorming the issue. For example, you may want to focus on creating after-school programs for youth, or you may be interested in having on-site tutors or mentors for kids struggling academically or socially. Both are important and outstanding ideas. They might both advance the goal of improving proficiency scores, or increasing school attendance. Experienced program planners approach a given problem with a diverse set of perspectives, a myriad of different approaches, and an array of strategies to tackle that problem. This will be your job too, as you create your program.

In order to gain the confidence of those involved and create stakeholders in the process, it is important to explore the perspectives of the potential players, as well as to assess your perspective as it evolves — this may involve some time. For example, I may find myself thinking one way after reading a story in the morning paper, only to change my perspective altogether after hearing a related story from a coworker. Building knowledge based on experiences and learning new techniques to manage situations can dramatically alter one's approach. Be sure to give yourself time between initial planning sessions to ensure that the energy of the initial idea lingers and can inspire ongoing work in the area.

Brainstorming

In the ideal world, all the stakeholders that you would like to involve in the planning process would be available when you need them, feel comfortable and find constructive ways to express their opinions, and be able to engage in idea building with one another, thus formulating an excellent set of all-inclusive program planning ideas. Of course, such a world doesn't exist. Nonetheless, we can still have formal and informal brainstorming sessions. Formal sessions include bringing all the players to the table, discussing the various ideas, and settling on an approach. Informal planning might entail catching the principal as she is running to a meeting to get her input on the general goal or catching up with a coworker at a party. It is important to involve as many people as possible in these early stages even if most of the partners contribute to the process informally.

Tip Box Six

Brainstorming

Formal Brainstorming: Formal sessions include bringing all the players to the table, discussing the various ideas, and settling on an approach.

Informal Brainstorming: Informal planning might entail catching the principal as she is running to a meeting to get her input on the general goal, or catching up with a coworker at a party or in the teachers' lounge to get his impressions.

Brainstorming does not require all stakeholders to be present; it can happen in segments, as long as one person can weave all the work together.

As you begin to brainstorm, remember the six questions: who, what, when, where, why and how. Often, there is a specific incident or need that triggers the desire to create a program. It could be a call by the superintendent for change, an issue raised by the PTA, a grant that you have heard about or maybe something that's been on your mind, and you decide the time has come to formally plan the program and obtain the funding.


CASE STUDY of BRICK (Part One)
(Brotherhood, Respect, Independence Conduct and Knowledge)

BRICK is the result of the work of a former Cleveland police officer, Tim Roberts. He recalls: "I started the BRICK program in 1996 in reaction to the anger, sadness and tragedy that surrounded me within the community where I was working. I was struck by the lack of self-esteem and community structure which left a community, particularly young men, paralyzed in a mode of self-destruction. The year before BRICK began, I lost three guys to the social ills in the streets. Despite the relationship that I had with these young men, the community fragmentation and lack of support systems ended up winning, and I lost these young men to the ultimate end.

"I knew, after this, that I had to do something. I knew that many people had experienced the anger and pain that I had seen…I wanted it to be known that we must, as a program, provide structure, love and support for our young men. And, yes, sadly enough, I anticipate we may lose a few battles, but I know if we provide the wisdom and strength via example, that we can win the war."

Consider what Mr. Roberts has said about the young men he hopes to help. Many of us can relate to the issues he speaks of. Knowing his predicament, let's brainstorm about what kinds of programs he could create to help change his community.

Potential Ideas, the Brainstorming Begins
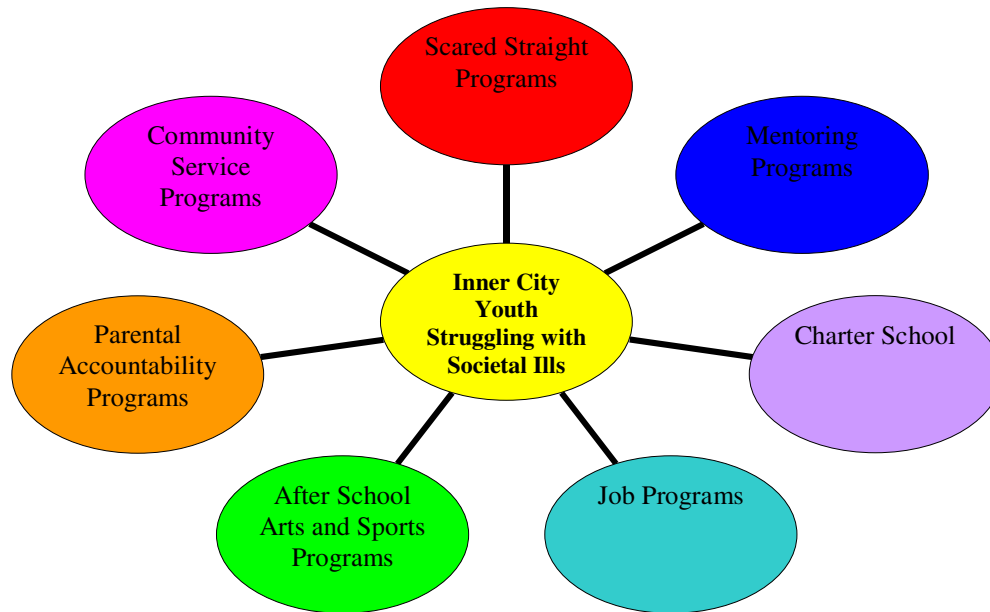
Mr. Roberts started his program plan by talking to people informally and assembling an arsenal of ideas. He went through a brainstorming session with parents, teachers, other security guards, community members, and students. By engaging many individuals in the process, he developed a program that included some of the ideas listed above but combined them to create his program.

CASE STUDY of BRICK (Part two)

The BRICK program operates in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). Over ninety percent of the youth who enter the BRICK program in seventh grade graduate from high school, a rate that is more than double that of their peers. The mission of the BRICK program is to save lives in the inner-city by teaching young men how to think critically and solve problems by respecting self, others and the environment, while creating a healthy long term support system. Through growth in the BRICK program, the young men serve as role models for the community (young and old), build community capacity and generate new perceptions and expectations for troubled communities. Through community service projects, enrichment activities, and regular program interaction, the young men build their inner self, direct family and community, and ultimately the community at large, with their new support system and self esteem tools. Young men in BRICK have a chance to see themselves in a light not previously available.

Mr. Roberts' program evolved from his initial ideas to a coherent plan as described in part two. Identify the issues that you would like to address, and you can begin to develop a program the same way.

Exercise Four

Look at the following issue and come up with six potential ideas to work toward addressing the problem.
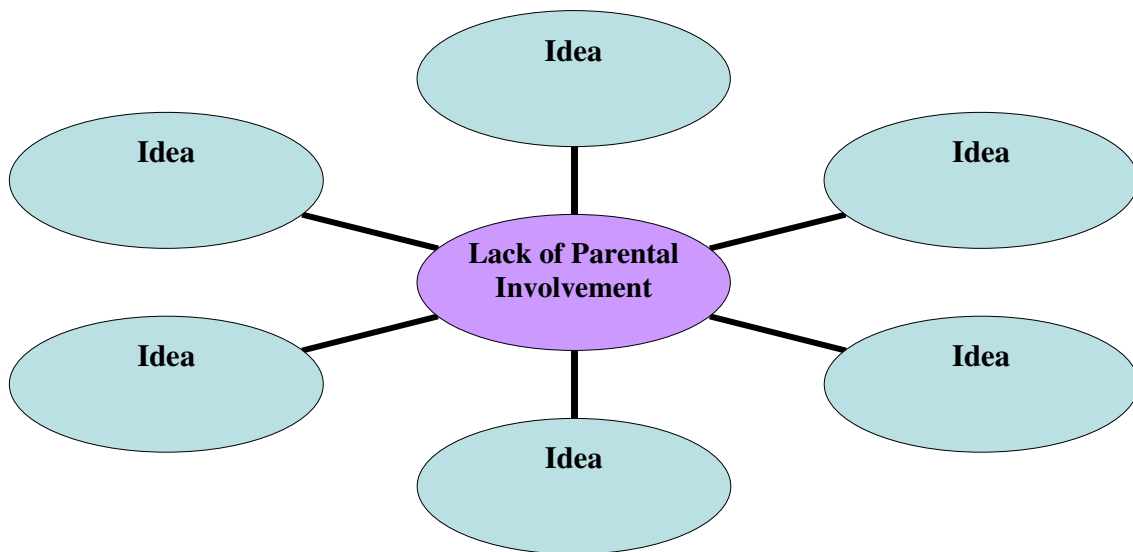
My Thoughts:

- Increased school outreach.
- Parental participation incentives.
- Mandated parental involvement.
- Educate parents on the value of their involvement.
- Find nonthreatening ways to break down barriers parents feel exist.
- Survey parents via interviews and focus groups. Create recommendations based on gathered information.
- Provide nontraditional programming to bring parents into the school.
- Access other key adults in the child's life.

Again, after brainstorming, it's easy to see the beginning of a strong program. The example illustrates a collection of ideas based on a specific issue that emerges in the brainstorming process. For example, the question may be: Why do our students score lower than the state average on the proficiency tests? Potential answers include:

- Lack of parental involvement.
- Lack of resources.
- School absenteeism.
- School environment.
- Perceived lack of value for schooling.
- Peer pressure not to study or be smart.
- Discipline issues.

Once an initial list is compiled, each idea needs to be discussed and examined as part of the vision for positive change. At this point there needs to be recognition that not everything can change at once. It is best to focus on one idea and build from there. In this example you could brainstorm multiple potential reasons and find solutions for the issues at hands. Some questions that you may want to think about when identifying a key idea include:

> ### Checklist of Questions for Reality Check on Brainstorming
>
> Can the problem be changed with a program?
> Do we have the ability to create a program in this area and gain support needed from key personnel?
> If change occurs, will it have an effect on the other issues on the list?
> Can a program be created and show tangible results in a given time period?
> Can a program be created that is sustainable?
> How can I get the biggest bang for my buck in this area?
> Which issue allows me to utilize my background and existing resources or collaborations?

Vision, goal and objective

Once we know what issue we want to tackle, we must move on to our vision. What is the vision for our purpose? The vision is the overarching ideal that drives the process. Our vision gives us the long-term outcome if we achieve the goal and objective we set for ourselves. Some examples of vision statements include:

- A drug-free school district.
- All students abide by and understand a code of conduct.
- Racism has been eliminated from the district.
- Every child has a parent or guardian involved on his behalf.

Each of these vision statements will build a stronger and healthier school or community. Lastly, vision is helpful in getting others to unite and become energized. It is a perfect way to introduce your aspiration within the cocktail conversation.

Exercise Five

Please create a vision statement that is concise and intriguing. We want to people to buy in to our program and really feel passionate about the project. In the following example, there are three topics. Consider each topic and think about it in terms of your school and your students, then create a vision statement that can help cultivate, nurture and enhance a constructive and confident environment at your school.

Topic: Art
Vision Statement: _____
_____ •

Topic: After School Activities
Vision Statement: _____
_____ •

Topic: Experiential Learning

Vision Statement:_____

_____ •

Potential Solutions: 1) Art — there will be arts integrated into all curriculum areas as a method of enhancing and improving overall proficiency scores in the district; 2) After-school activities — to increase school attendance and general comfort level in the school, via mandatory programs for youth who are deemed at-risk; 3) all schools will partake in off-site learning at least once a month in any core academic area.

The vision helps to clarify the nature and mind-set of the program goal. The program goal is still broad, but it tells more specifically what you want to achieve. It is the general idea of the program. In the preceding, the vision was arts integrated into all curriculum areas as a method of enhancing and improving overall proficiency scores in the district. The goal was to create various strategies to integrate arts into the classroom. In the second example, the vision is to increase school attendance and general comfort level of students. The goal might be multiple after-school programs in various areas of interest for youth to engage in fun activities, build a meaningful relationship with an adult, and understand the safety and value the school provides for them to succeed.

BRICK Case Study

In the example about the BRICK program, the vision was to save the lives of young men. The goal was to provide programs for inner-city males that would help them graduate and become productive, healthy and valued community members. The objective in this case was the creation of an after school program for young men between the ages of 12-19, that would provide academic, emotional, and social support with a focus on youth citizenship.

Once we have identified our goal, we must find our objective. The objective is a quantifiable, specific action that will support the vision and the goal. The objective needs to be measurable, accurate, and set within an authentic and tangible time frame. The objective is the genuine quantity representing the goal and a section of the future vision. Understanding the various levels — vision, goal and objective — will allow you to provide a picture of the desired outcomes in a poetic manner that can be measured with concrete results. Thus, when you ultimately write your full proposal, you will be able to use this framework to draw in the reader and guide the additional components necessary.

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Tip Box 7

What is the difference between visions, goals and objectives?

Once you determine your vision, goal and objectives for the proposal, the only changes that will occur will be in the
number of goals and objectives. You will make your objectives specific, since they are the equivalent of support beams
for your house.

Vision: The vision is the over arching ideal that drives the process.

Goal: The program goal is still broad, but it tells more specifically what you want to achieve. It is the general idea of
the program that you are going to create and how it is going look in a sentence.

Objective: The objective is a quantifiable, specific program or action that will support the vision and the goal.
```

Examples of Vision, Goals and Objectives:

Vision	Goal	Objective
Integrate arts into all curriculum areas as a method of enhancing and improving overall proficiency scores in the district.	Design various strategies to integrate arts into the classroom.	Provide three pilot sites with artists in residence to help teachers use various theater techniques to increase literacy skills, including: point of view, setting, plot and character development.
Increase school attendance and general comfort level in the school, via mandatory programs for youth who are deemed at-risk	Create multiple after school programs in various areas of interest for youth to engage in fun activities, build a meaningful relationship with an adult and understand the safety and value that the school provides for them to ultimately succeed.	Provide a program based on student interest. Students will identify their issues and concerns and create sub-groups to work on solutions, while honing their academic skills and improving their confidence in the process.

In this chapter we have discussed several important aspects of planning a sound and productive program. Remember the steps involved:

- BRAINSTORM formally and informally.
- Take the best ideas and build a VISION.
- Find specific ways to express the vision; create a GOAL.
- Take the goal and break it down to something you can do, the OBJECTIVE.

This is the trickiest part of the entire planning process and probably of the entire proposal. Taking time to brainstorm, build a solid vision, create an obtainable goal, and develop quantified objectives is crucial to succeed and gain necessary credibility for a winning program plan and proposal. The rest of the process involves putting many of the ideas and concepts you've created in order and classifying them.

Objective   **Vision**
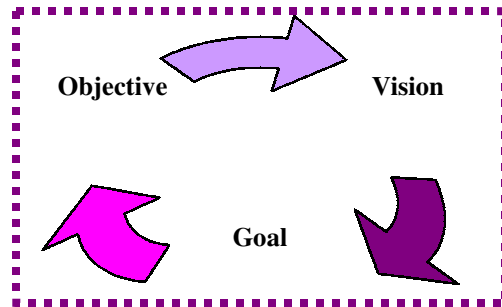
Goal

CHAPTER 5

Building a ladder to success

After you have defined your vision, goal and objective, the next endeavor is building the stepladder. This is where the meat of the program plan is designed and includes all of the exercises we have completed so far. Begin by writing down all the things you need to do to achieve your objective. You will then use a stepladder as a strategy to organize each move you make to develop your program.
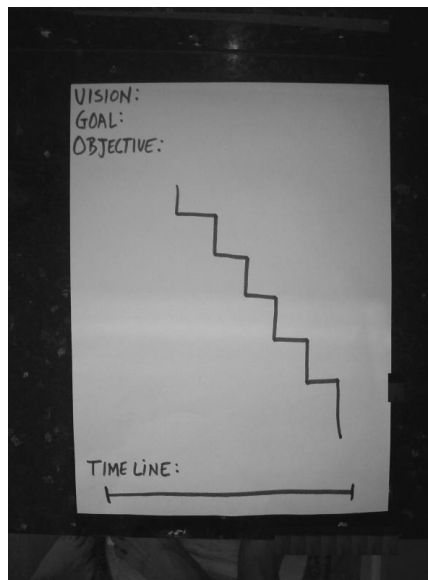
We will use the BRICK program as the model for creating our stepladder. Let's review the vision, goal and objective we outlined for the BRICK program:

- The vision was to save the lives of young men.
- The goal was to provide programs for inner-city males that would help them graduate and become productive, healthy and valued community members.
- The objective was the creation of an after-school program for young men between the ages of 12 and 19 that provides academic, emotional and social support with a focus on youth citizenship.

Let's brainstorm things we would need to do to make this program happen, and don't forget to think about your program planning questions during the process: who, what, when, where, why and how.

Make your objective a reality

Remember the ground rules: There isn't any order necessary here; name any component that comes to mind, since we can group items together later or eliminate them; stick to meeting the needs of the objective.

Lastly, as you do these exercises, you may find that you need to revise your vision, goal or objective. That is fine. Better here than in the meeting with your principal, PTA, or, worse yet, your future funding source.

IDEAS for Creating BRICK:

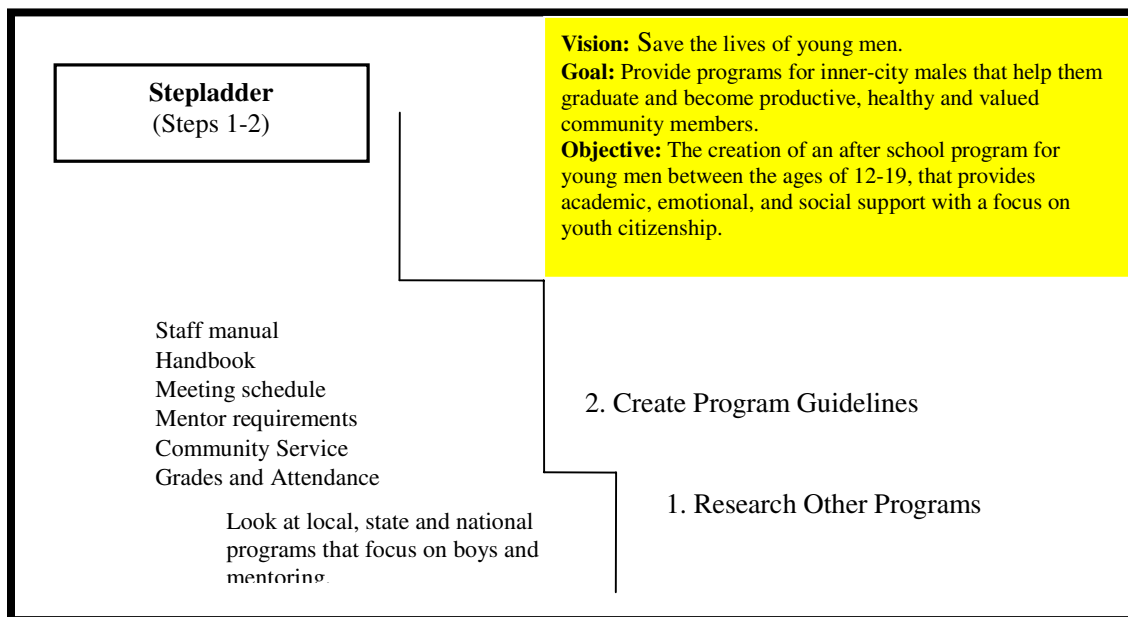|		
Research other programs	Leadership Seminars	Give incentives for success
Market program	Develop Program guidelines	Mentor training for staff
Evaluate by using grades and attendance	Find partners	Program logistics
Community Service	Get the school to buy-in to the program	
	Involve parents	

Above is a partial roster of items needed to build the program. There will likely be others, but we can always add to the list as we go along. Now is a good time for a reality check. You need to eliminate ideas for which you lack the requisite expertise or resources. We are in the thick of the planning stage now, and we want to come as close as we can to what we will actually do in the final plan.

Each item in the above list should be reviewed, with an eye toward choosing what you need to do first to make the program a reality. Let's begin by saying, for the sake of argument, that two members of your team have opposing views on what should be the first step. One person may believe that we have to write guidelines that fit our situation before we can research other programs, while another team member believes that we should research programs that are similar and then build our program. In this case, both arguments have merit; however, having the most knowledge first will lead to greater success and also create less work. If a program already exists and has credibility, it can give you guidance to some easy steps for success and potential pitfalls along the way.

Once you have a sense of what is out there and how these programs fare in similar climates, you will be ready to develop program guidelines, so you can then approach potential partners with an initial set of ideas. As you ponder your first step, write at the top of your paper the vision, goal and objective. Then you can draw a stepladder, as seen in the picture above. Please note below how we have organized the first two steps.

Stepladder
(Steps 1-2)

Vision: Save the lives of young men.
Goal: Provide programs for inner-city males that help them graduate and become productive, healthy and valued community members.
Objective: The creation of an after school program for young men between the ages of 12-19, that provides academic, emotional, and social support with a focus on youth citizenship.

Staff manual
Handbook
Meeting schedule
Mentor requirements
Community Service
Grades and Attendance

Look at local, state and national programs that focus on boys and mentoring.

2. Create Program Guidelines

1. Research Other Programs

As we move on through the stepladder and build the next four to five steps, we always work on the assumption that the prior step has been completed successfully. The next item to be completed makes use of the six key questions. Here we record the specific answers to those questions that are essential to creating a successful program. In this case, we must assume that we have researched other programs, found successful examples outside of the local area, and have taken the best components from these programs to guide our design. Step two discusses the creation of program guidelines. We have listed, on the left side of the stepladder, a few of the components that make up sound program guidelines. Again, further construction will be needed to hammer out specific designs and answer specific questions for each step in the order.

Now, in this example, after we have researched other programs and created program guidelines, we need to pick from our list the next step to follow. In this case, the team members feel that it is time to get buy-in and build collaborations to increase our credibility and the longevity of the program. The team then decides that the next step is formulating program logistics, founded on the newly created partnerships and buy-in from the community at large, the school community, students and parents. This process may be quite informal. Program planners can work with individuals that represent these groups to establish the responsibilities and accountability process.

Stepladder
(Steps 1-4)

Vision: Save the lives of young men.
Goal: Provide programs for inner-city males that would help them graduate and become productive, healthy and valued community members.
Objective: The creation of an after school program for young men between the ages of 12-19, that provides year academic, emotional, and social support with a focus on youth citizenship.

Space
Time
Transportation
Food/materials

4. Program logistics

Stakeholders /
Networks
School Community
Community At-Large
Students/Parents

3. Create collaboration and secure buy-in from key players

Staff manual
Handbook
Meeting schedule
Mentor requirements
Community Service
Grades and Attendance

2. Create program guidelines

Look at local, state and national programs that focus on boys and mentoring.
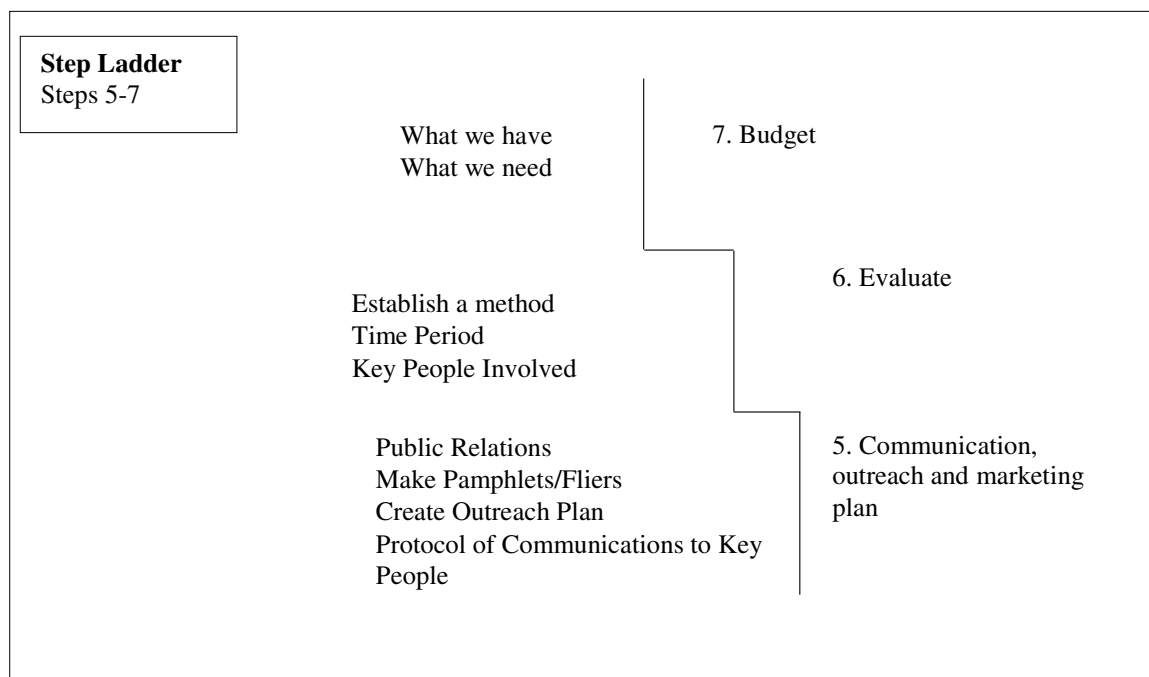
1. Research other programs

There are a few more steps we want to build into our ladder. Let's review what has happened thus far, according to the stepladder above:
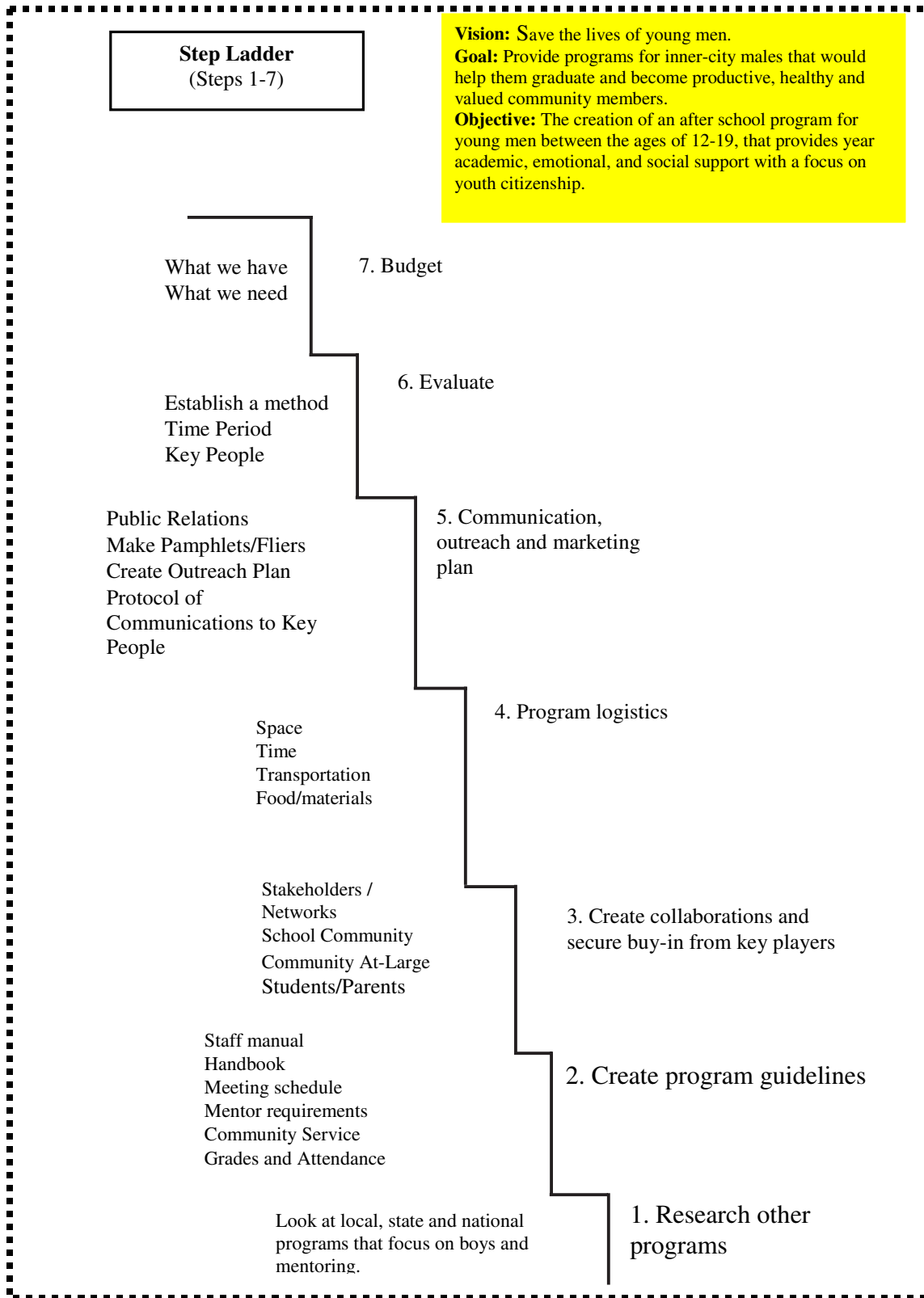
- We have researched other programs, found good models, and integrated the best ideas into our program. We have taken notes on these programs, as they may serve as a reference point in our proposal, or as a marker of credibility for the type of program we are initiating.
- We have designed how the program will operate, what will occur during the school year, and how we will implement the process.
- We have built collaborations with key organizations and individuals from the community and have begun to put together the steps necessary to get community buy-in.
- We have now spoken with our partners and collaborators, and we hammered down the specific things that we need to do to make the program operate smoothly and effectively.

Once again, we can look back at our list and determine the next step. After much thought and discussion, we decide to develop a communication/outreach/marketing plan. This will help us spread the word about the program, increase our parental involvement, and find other resources to support our work. Next, we need to think about an evaluation component. How will we evaluate our work and make changes so that if something isn't working we can fix it? The last step we may need to think about is the budget. What do we have? What do we need?

Once we outline these final steps, we will be ready to create a time line, finalize our cocktail conversation, and look at potential funding sources. Below are steps five, six and seven.

```
Step Ladder
Steps 5-7

What we have                           7. Budget
What we need


                                                  6. Evaluate

Establish a method
Time Period
Key People Involved

                                                  5. Communication,
Public Relations                                  outreach and marketing
Make Pamphlets/Fliers                             plan
Create Outreach Plan
Protocol of Communications to Key
People
```

These combined steps leave us with a complete outline for our new program. Take a look at the ladder now that it is complete.

Step Ladder (Steps 1-7)	**Vision:** Save the lives of young men. **Goal:** Provide programs for inner-city males that would help them graduate and become productive, healthy and valued community members. **Objective:** The creation of an after school program for young men between the ages of 12-19, that provides year academic, emotional, and social support with a focus on youth citizenship.

What we have
What we need

7. Budget

Establish a method
Time Period
Key People

6. Evaluate

Public Relations
Make Pamphlets/Fliers
Create Outreach Plan
Protocol of
Communications to Key
People

5. Communication,
outreach and marketing
plan

Space
Time
Transportation
Food/materials

4. Program logistics

Stakeholders /
Networks
School Community
Community At-Large
Students/Parents

3. Create collaborations and
secure buy-in from key players

Staff manual
Handbook
Meeting schedule
Mentor requirements
Community Service
Grades and Attendance

2. Create program guidelines

Look at local, state and national
programs that focus on boys and
mentoring.

1. Research other
programs

Once you have finished making your stepladder, you need to create a time line. Funding entities need an idea of how long each step will take to complete. It is never a good idea to set specific dates; failure to make any deadlines may create a feeling of doom and gloom around the project. It is better to estimate in increments of months and understand that you can overlap time frames for any given step. Here is a sample timeline based on the above stepladder.

Step Ladder Timeline

1-2 Months	1 Month	3-4 Months	1 Month	3-4 Months	1 Month	1 Month
Step1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7
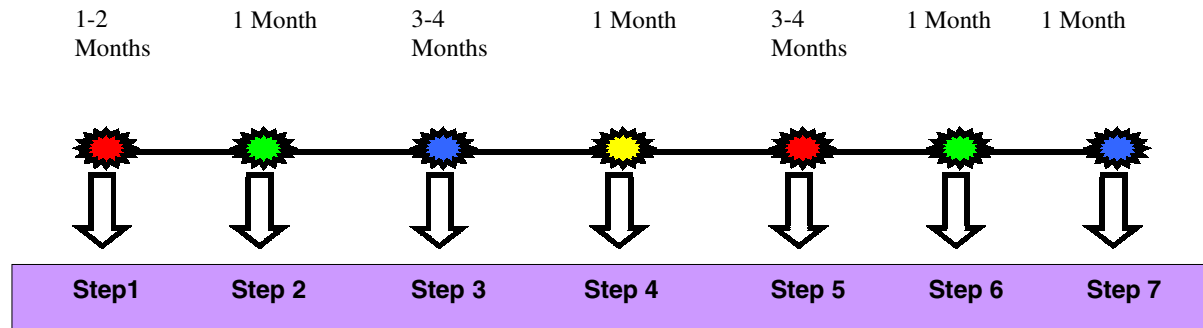
Case Study: The BRICK Program
"What was the result of the step ladder"

Below is a summary describing the program and a list of the activities that occurred. Compare it to the brainstorming and stepladder we've already reviewed.

The key components of the BRICK program - Community Building, Community Service, and Citizenship Training – work together to foster resiliency. The programming involved provides an avenue for young men to analyze situations and effectively communicate their ideas. The interactive programming and strategies provide a base that helps build the character and esteem of young men. BRICK challenges young men to look critically at their communities and identify problems and resources to help solve those problems in their communities. The young people in the program determine what role they can play in making a difference in their community. Community service projects provide them with an opportunity to work together to set goals, forge plans, and reflect on the execution of the process. Young men in BRICK, having experienced success within their school and communities, grow in confidence and self-esteem.

Activity	Description	Time and Frequency	Individual Attendance at Event/Process for Selection of B.R.I.C.K. Members
Weekly Meetings	B.R.I.C.K. members meet and follow a designated agenda that addresses issues such as: upcoming events, member successes, current event issues and sign up for activities	Once a week/ At the end of the school day	All students/ Anyone interested
Volunteer Activities *Walk to Read – this is a highly successful program, where youth read and interact with preschool children weekly.	Day care centers, Community centers, Senior citizen centers, and Neighborhood projects	Once a week/ At the end of the school day	Five to all students (depends on event)/Identified by Instructor or by volunteer
Workshops	On issues that are important to the youth, and are identified by the youth	4 Times a year	All students/ Anyone interested
Presentations at Other Places	About the B.R.I.C.K. program	As invited to do them	Identified students
Conferences	On Youth Related Issues	Attend them when they are relevant	Identified students
Special Fun Activities	Trip to Washington D.C., Cedar Point, Six Flags	Several Times a Year	Students who are involved all year
Youth Forum	Youth Forum to be developed and presented to the community by B.R.I.C.K. members on important youth issues	1 Time	All students/ Anyone interested

The combination of all these exercises culminates into the stepladder approach, which once completed, provides an easy outline to be used in your program planning. The approach can also

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be used to teach critical thinking skills in the classroom; it's successful with high school students and adults. The process enables you to define each component of your plan, use each rung to further the actual proposal, and gives you a sound and organized approach to share with potential funding sources, collaborators and community members.

Quick Tip Box 8

Step Ladder and Time Line Structure

1. Brainstorm all components connected to objective.
2. Stay focused on the objective.
3. Don't hesitate to change objectives and goals not properly represented during brainstorming sessions.
4. Order steps and add details under each rung on the ladder.
5. Remind yourself as you go along that each step prior was successful and gives you insights for the next step.
6. Create a timeline using days, months or years…no specific dates.
7. Use your vision, goal and objective as a check point to review each rung of the ladder.

CHAPTER 6

Assessment: So how did we do?

Evaluation of the stepladder is essential. Once it's developed, determine its ability to succeed. The program's likelihood of success can be measured in one of two ways — process evaluation and product evaluation.

Let's look first at the process evaluation, which is really just as it sounds. You examine the steps you went through to create the product. Understanding the positives and the negatives will help you execute the method better next time, providing valuable hints for a smoother and quicker course of action.

Process evaluation requires an in-depth look at what happened during the creation of the stepladder. From this evaluation, you should learn whether the process was efficient, open, well-organized, productive and inventive. We might pose the following questions:

- Did you feel your time was well spent?
- Did you feel the process was efficient?
- Did you feel comfortable sharing your point of view?
- Did you accomplish what you set out to do?
- During the meetings, were you able to accomplish a lot?
- Did you find yourself listening to or coming up with alternative solutions to issues?
- Did you feel that people listened to your ideas?
- Did the time and location for meetings make it difficult for you to participate?
- Did you participate in informal discussion around the idea with other team members, collaborators, family or friends?

Answers to these questions assess whether the overall capacity and potential achievement of the program are likely to be realized. Questions can be asked informally to team members, sent out in e-mail or regular mail, distributed anonymously at the last meeting, or asked in a formal interview. The information can be collected and shared with team members in a report or letter so that each person can see results and make changes in their own work in the future. Lastly, when you ask your evaluation questions, you can leave them open-ended, as they appear above, or you can put them in the form of true or false or a Likert scale (1-5; 1 is the very best, 3 is average and 5 is poor). Sometimes, when you are doing a quick evaluation like this, a scale is handy, as you can quickly average the scores and find out general opinion without too much intrusion.

Exercise III: Process Evaluation

Think of the last meeting you had with your subject area team or a grade level group and what you talked about. Think of five questions to ask about the meeting that would generate a clear understanding of what you went through and would explore the roots of the process involved.

1.

2.

3,

4.

5.

Potential Questions: 1) Was the meeting run well? 2) Did it follow the agenda?
3) Were people respectful of others' opinions?
4) Were issues settled on and plans designed to move forward on any given issue?
5) Was the time spent worthwhile?

The second type of evaluation is product evaluation. In this case the program is the product. Is the program sound? Some questions we may ask ourselves at this point include:
- Is this realistic?
- Did we include enough or too many collaborators?
- Is there a clear chain of responsibility and accountability?
- What are the costs?
- Is there enough time for our staff members to achieve their role?
- Can we find the people?
- Is there enough time?
- What is the sustainability of the project?
- Can I do the project if it is only half funded?

Again, the same method of analysis can be used with this approach: Likert scale, interviews, e-mail, and mail.

Both the process and product evaluation are good ways to keep your planning up-to-date and as flawless as possible. Evaluation is a clear way to show funding sources that you are managing their dollars well and are ready to make changes for the better if the system has or develops flaws.

Tip Box Nine

Process and Product Evaluations

Both process and product evaluations are important to improving and building upon the work completed or about to be embarked upon.

Process Evaluation - The process evaluation requires an in depth look at what happened during the creation of the step ladder.

Product Evaluation – The product evaluation looks at what was the final product created.

CHAPTER 7

Budget and sustainability

Facts and figures

Once you have completed the stepladder, you should have a clear idea of the program plan, what steps need to be taken to achieve that plan, the project's goals and objectives, and what the evaluation is going to look like. Along with your earlier work, such as identifying your organization's assets and partners and initial brainstorming, you are now well on your way to having written your proposal.

In order to complete the preproposal writing process, we need to address the budget and sustainability of the program. It is well-known in the grants writing community that the majority of mistakes are made writing the budget. This is due to poor planning, a lack of creativity, too many if/then scenarios, and overall carelessness.

Poor planning happens when the budget is not addressed as a part of the system, but rather is seen as its own entity. Many times it is cut and pasted in to the proposal from the finance department, particularly if the grant writer lacks financial expertise. Beware! Foundation staff can sniff budget babble from miles away, and they are experienced in trimming the fat. Budgets should economically restate the plan.

A lack of creativity can be deadly to the entire grant process. It is analogous to teaching a student: If they give little to the process, they will learn little. This is especially true of a project budget. You have already heavily invested while creating the proposal plan; however, you must really let your ingenuity shine through. You must look at your partners, at what you can offer, and at what might be available to you in the community. Finding matches, employing various funding streams, and using what you already possess signals commitment to the potential funder, and belief in the partnership as being equitable and well-grounded.

Proposal writers are often done in by a case of the "if we get this, then we can move that" syndrome when developing the budget. This common mistake arises from a desire to extend beyond the stated vision of the program, by using funds for programs that are not explicitly targeted in the proposal. The result is a bloated budget, weighed down by an unwieldy set of contingencies. Not surprisingly, funding entities recognize and look negatively upon overly manufactured budgets.

Lastly, carelessness accounts for frequent errors in the process. An extra zero here or there and you are suddenly requesting 10 times as much or as little as you need for your project. A simple mistake is perceived as a lack of competence, hardly a good impression to make with potential funders.

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Tip Box 10

Budget Mistakes Result From…

- **Poor Planning – Budgets should economically restate the plan.**

- **Lack of Creativity – Be resourceful in finding matches and use what you have already.**

- **A Bad Case of the "if we get this…then we can move that…" Don't make elaborate plans about how to move monies around to meet the budget, since this often creates inflation of figures in the project budget.**

- **Carelessness – Most mistakes in the budget are attributed to poor adding or an extra zero. Check and double check all numbers!**

Precautions aside, writing your budget is an easy process that benefits from input by many individuals. Let's execute a simple exercise in budget planning to get you in the right frame of mind to develop your budget.

Exercise six

Let's start out by pretending that we are going to plan a budget for running a fun and creative after-school program for kids. The program will accept up to 100 youth, ages K-fifth grade and will be located at the school between the hours of 3-6 p.m.

Items Needed:

_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____

Once you have listed all the items that you need, go back and think of them in terms of what items you can group together and about the quantity of items (how many of each you'd need).

Here is my list for our hypothetical after-school program and the different phases I went through to plan it:

Phase One: General List		
Space	Gym Equipment	Carpet
Staff	Playground Equipment	Blackboard
Fliers	Art smocks	Chalk and Eraser
Permission Slips	Computers	Room Décor
Craft Supplies	Paper Products	Mats
Books	First Aide Kit	Cots
Snacks	Heat	Office Supplies
Incentives	Electric	Tape Player
Bathrooms	Water	Computer Programs
Cleaning Supplies	Tables	Books on Tape
Games	Chairs	

As you can see the list includes not only the items that I need to make the program a success, but all the equipment for preparation, the cleaning supplies for before and after the kids are there, the place for the program, and bathroom amenities.

Phase Two: Categories/Amounts

List	Program Materials	Amounts	Facility Supplies/Facility	Amount
Preparation	Staff Fliers Permission Slips Carpet Room Décor Cots Office Supplies	Director (1) 500 (for the school) 150 slips 7' by 9' foot Posters etc 2 350 Pencils, 50 pens, 1 box of clips, 10 reams of paper, 3 staplers, 10 pkgs of tape	Bathrooms Gym Equipment Playground Equipment Space Heat Electric Water	Unquantifiable for many of these costs, except equipment
Program	Snacks Incentives Art smocks Computers Paper Products First Aide Kit Staff	100 kids, 5 days, 40 weeks Certificates and small toys 50 smocks 20 computers 100 kids, 5 days, 40 weeks 2 kits 6 part time, 1 full time	Heat Electric Water Tables Chairs Space Carpet Space Clean Up Materials: towels, soap, Windex, pine sol etc	Unquantifiable for many of these costs, except tables, chairs and carpet

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	Blackboard	5		
	Chalk and Eraser	10 boxes, 10 erasers		
	Craft Supplies	100 kids, 5 days, 40 weeks		
	Books	Unquantifiable		
	Games	40		
	Tape Player	6		
	Computer Programs	4 (master programs)		
	Books on Tape	36		

Once you categorized your items and how many of each you'll need for your project, determine what items are already in your possession and what you need to acquire. Staying with our after-school program example, let's suppose that we already have the highlighted items from this list. These can be in-kind donations that we make to the project budget.

Phase Three: What do we have and what do we need?

Space	Gym Equipment	Carpet
Staff	Playground Equipment	Blackboard
Fliers	Art smocks	Chalk and Eraser
Permission Slips	Computers	Room Décor
Craft Supplies	Paper Products	Mats
Books	First Aid Kit	Cots
Snacks	Heat	Office Supplies
Incentives	Electric	Tape Player
Bathrooms	Water	Computer Programs
Cleaning Supplies	Tables	Books on Tape
Games	Chairs	

By making use of what we already have, the highlighted items cut down our program costs considerably. We might need to pay for many of these items even if we weren't developing a new program, but delineating the costs involved shows your willingness to make a contribution to the program. This investment can carry a lot of weight from the perspective of the funding entity. It shows that you are able to make a significant contribution to the grant, while your real out-of-pocket expense may be minimal.

Finally, if this is a proposal that you will be looking to fund for several years, then you will have to think about your needs in subsequent years, and if you can make the same contribution. It is also important to think about the actual sustainability of the project, since funders will not always be there to support a project. It may happen from time to time, but is certainly not something you can take for granted.

This is an overview of the budget. In a grant proposal, the budget section will be made up of several components:

Summary — overall total you are asking for.

Personnel — breakdown of staff costs.

Nonpersonnel — breakdown of other expenses.

Justification — what the key expenses are and why you need this money more specifically.

Be certain that you include your organization's financial staff in the budget process to ensure accuracy and buy-in.

Brick Case Study
The Budget

This is an overview of the budget. In a grant proposal, each section (summary, overall total, personnel, non-personnel and justification) needs to be written out and each component needs to be detailed in the same way.

Budget Summary

I) Personnel	Needed	Donated	Total
A) Salaries and Wages	103,650.	41,000.	144,650.
B) Fridge Benefits	11,375.	11,375.	22,750.
C) Consultants and Contract Services	14,725.	24,275.	39,000.
Total	**129,750**	**76,650**	**206,400**

II) Non-Personnel	Needed	Donated	Total
A) Space Cost	0	21,000.	21,000.
B) Rental, Lease or Purchase	2,100.	0	2,100.
C) Consumable Supplies	1,500.	5,050.	6,550.
D) Travel	3,950	13,420	17,370.
E) Electronics	1,920.	3,360.	4,280.
F) Other Costs	100.	0	100.
Total	**9,570**	**42,830**	**52,400**

Overall Total	**139,320**	**119,480**	**258,800**

BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION			
I) Personnel	Needed	Donated	Total
A) Salaries and Wages			
(1) Executive Director			
$5,417.00/mo@12mo	42,000.00	23,000.00	65,000.00
(2) Mentors			
$600/mo@12mo x 6	25,200.00	18,000.00	43,200.00
(3) Community Capacity Builder and Project Director			
$1,687.50/mo@12mo	20,250.00	0	20,250.00
(4) Administrative Assistant			
$1350/mo@12mo	16,200.00	0	16,200.00
Total	103,650.	41,000.	144,650.
B) Fringe Benefits			
(1) Executive Director			
65,000@35%	11,375.00	11375.00	22,750.00
Total	11,375.	11375.	22,750.
C) Consultants and Contract Services			
(1) Evaluation Consultant			
$75/hr@15hr/mo x 12mo	4,725.00	8,775.00	13,500.00
(2) Grants Consultant			
$75/hr@15hr/mo x 12mo	0	13,500.00	13,500.00
(3) Summer Mentors			
$1000.00ea x 12youth	10,000.00	2,000.00	12,000.00
Total	14,725.	24,275.	39,000.

Brick Case Study
The Budget
Continued

II) Non-Personnel	Needed	Donated	Total
A) Space Cost			
(1) School Facilities			
(office space, meeting space, conference space)			
(12mo@1,500.00mo)	0	18,000.00	18,000.00
(2) School Equipment			
(chairs, desks, file cabinets, computers)			
(12mo@250.00mo)	0	3,000.00	3,000.00
Total	0	21,000.	21,000.
B) Rental, Lease or Purchase			
(1) Computer laptops for staff (2)			
2 laptops@1050.00ea	2,100.00	0	2,100.00
Total	2,100.	0	2,100.
C) Consumable Supplies			
(1) Handbooks			
(350@$3.00ea)	0	1,050.00	1.050.00
(2) Staff Handbooks			
(20students@$5.00ea)	0	100.00	100.00
(3) Conference materials			
(350students@5.00/per/yr)	0	1,750.00	1,750.00
(4) Desk Top Supplies			
(10 staff @$15per yr)	0	150.00	150.00
(5) Incentives			
(350students@$10ea per yr)	1,500.00	2,000.00	3,500.00
Total	1,500.	5,050.	6,550.
D) Travel			
(1) Staff			
(50mi@2@$.35@12mo)	0	420.00	420.00
(2) Staff Training			
(Conference cost, travel, lodging and per diem for food)			
(8@$400 for a 12 mo period)	3,200.00	0	3,200.00
(3) Program Trainings			
(each youth will attend at least one training)			
(350 youth@ $5.00 per youth)	750.00	1,000.00	1,750.00
(4) Field Trips			
(6 programs @$2,000.00 each/per year)	0	12,000.00	12,000.00
Total	3,950.	13,420.	17,370.

Brick Case Study
The Budget
Continued

II) Non-Personnel	Needed	Donated	Total
E) Electronics			
(1) Cable Connection for the modem			
2 laptops@ $60 per month@12mo)	0	1,440.00	1,440.00
(2) Cell Phones			
8 phones@$40.00 per mo@12mo	1,920.00	1,920.00	2,840.00
Total	1,920.	3,360.	4,280.
F) Other Costs			
(1) Postage			
($100.00 per year)	100.00	0	100.00
Total	100.	0	100.

Budget Justification

Executive Director- It is imperative to hire Mr. Roberts full time to expand the BRICK program. Currently, he holds down two jobs and cannot provide the time needed to supervise, train, and educate the staff, community and young men to their fullest potential.

Mentors – Year round program contact with staff and students will increase trust and build long-term loyalty from staff and students.

Capacity Builder – This position is essential to building the program both in the targeted community and within the greater community. In the targeted community, the capacity builder will serve as a liaison to bring more adults to the program. In the greater community, this person will outreach to businesses, corporations, foundations and the media to build relationships and support networks for long time program success.

Evaluation Consultant – The program was evaluated several years ago and invaluable information about program mechanics and success were revealed. This needs to be on-going, to provide support for what works and the rethinking of unsuccessful components.

Summer Mentors – This will connect past students with the program in the capacity as a mentor. It will also help build a long term network and support system for young men who have graduated with those who are just starting out in the program.

Laptops – These computers will help the program stay organized and in touch with the students, their parents, the teachers, the district and the community.

Incentives – These include awards, t-shirts and food. Incentives are a necessary tangible reward for hard work. If you partake in the program, small and large rewards of tangible and intangible magnitude will come your way.

Staff Training – This service ensures that all program staff involved can learn skills to improve their capacity and application of capacity within the school setting, as well the community. The growth of the staff will only improve the program; increase the number of youth impacted; and enhance retention. Staff will be given the opportunity to choose workshops in their area of expertise.

Program Training – Youth will pick from this series of workshops at least one during the course of the year. The workshops will focus on issues from community building to individual capacity building.

Fiscal maintenance

What is sustainability? It can be examined two ways: through program operation and program funding. Let's use the Brick Program again as an example.

If the program is successful and achieves its goal by providing a mentor and citizenship program to inner-city youth, we must ask what needs to be done in the next few years to increase the success level of program youth and to increase participation by other eligible youth? Answers to those questions define sustainability for program operation.

Sustainability → Program: What will this program look like in 5 years?

Sustainability → Funding: How will the budget sustain itself over time?
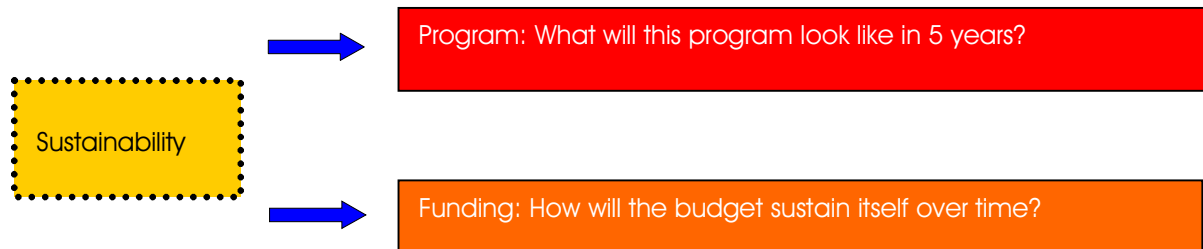
When you plan your project, it is imperative to think about long-term opportunities, as well as potential threats to the program's viability. Ask yourself these questions to help develop your program sustainability, or prepare for a meeting with a potential funder:

Program operation sustainability
- What is the expected life span of this project?
- What will eliminate the need for this project to exist any longer?
- Who makes the decisions about your program, and what is it dependent upon?
- If the program works well, will it be expanded?
- If the evaluation proves that the program is unsuccessful in meeting its goals, what impact will this have on the life of the program?
- Are your partnerships strong, clear and unambiguous?
- Will you enhance the program to include more services if necessary?

There are many more questions that you can ask yourself in relation to the future of the program. By sincerely exploring the program's sustainability, your opportunity for long-term funding will increase significantly.

We all know that funding from a particular source won't last forever, so we must also consider how we will keep the funding streams going, once the original monies have been used. Prepare to keep the money coming in by asking yourself the following questions when your original donors have completed their obligations:

Program funding sustainability
- Does this project have any other way of maintaining itself other than an outside funding entity?
- Are there any other methods to fund the program (e.g., membership)?
- How long can you go to the funding sources that you are looking at?
- Is a program expansion fundable?
- Can you work out a set of creative matches to decrease the amount of funding that is needed over time?
- How long until there is no longer a need for the services that you are offering?
- Do you have someone who can help you find long-term budget answers?

These are some of the many questions that will get you thinking about the sustainability of the program, which is a subject of great interest to funders. They will not want to be the long-term backbone of the program. Even if you are counting on federal, state or local government dollars, these grants are variable and subject to changes in the political climate. This is definitely the time to think outside the box for solutions.

Partners

Volunteers

Adopt a blank

Trade offs

Bartering

Memberships

Fundraisers

Benefits

Shows

Drives

43

CHAPTER 8

Best practices

Top five tips

This final section of the book will look at five ways to boost the prospects of a successful proposal. The grant proposal frames your program plan, explains why it is important, and for whom it will make a difference. The task at the start may seem overwhelming, but as with most things that are highly structured, if you follow the steps laid out in this book, answering the funder's questions you should be able to win the funding you need for your project.

1. Research the funding body. It's important to know the overall aim of the funding body and its focus. For a government grant, this information can be garnered from information about the particular department and its regulations. It is easy to gain valuable information about the grant from the federal government's grants.gov website, department websites and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

For a foundation grant, whether it is a public or private foundation, it is important to know the mission of the agency and who has received grants in the past. I started a foundation chart that I look back to before I narrow down potential funders. I research multiple foundations and use the chart to guide me in the process. I may choose ten to twelve foundations in order to develop funding for a particular grant. By using the continuously updated chart, it's easy to match my vision with the mission of the funding agency. I also review tax returns, Form 990s, or the annual reports to clue me in to how many schools like mine were funded, the amount funded, and the types of projects that were most likely to be funded. Look back as far as five years and look for patterns in funding — this will help you draw sound conclusions and concise decisions on dollars to seek and the way in which to frame the proposal.

Foundation Name/Address	Mission	Type of Funding	Will Not Fund	Application Process	Funding Cycle	Special Instructions	Highs and Lows and averages	Geographic Location
Foundation The George Gund Foundation 45 Prospect Avenue W. Cleveland, OH 44115 Telephone: 216-241-3114 FAX 216-241-6560 David T. Abbott, Ex. Dir. info@gundfdn.org www.gundfdn.org	To contribute to human well-being and the progress of society …	Arts, economic develop-ment, community revitalization education, environment, human services, special projects	Individuals	Organizational. Background, Project Description, Budget Info, Supporting Documents	December 30, March 30, June 30, September 30	No faxed or emailed proposal; one set of proposals	High - $100,000 Low - $4900 Avg. - $20,000	Greater Cleveland, State, and Nation
Foundation Martha Holden Jennings Foundation 1228 Euclid Ave. Ste. 710 Cleveland, OH 44115 Telephone: (216) 589-5700 Contact: William T. Hiller, Exec. Dir http://mhjf.org	To explore new frontiers and to promote more effective teaching in Ohio's primary and secondary secular schools.	Specifically interested in programmatic aspects of projects	Personal travel, endowment campaigns, teacher stipends, general, substitute bus transporta-tion, or graduate study	Boiler plate; no prescribed application form for grant proposals, except application cover page and superintendent endorsement page	20th of the month preceding the month in which grants are to be considered; don't meet February, July, October, or December.	Complete the applicant cover page, and four additional typed pages explaining details of request;, superinten-dent completes the superinten-dent endorse-ment page	Grant to Educa-tors program max is $3,000; Other larger educa-tion grants available	Primarily Ohio

2. Connect with a potential resource. Speak with a funding body and past grantees, and go to technical sessions, if offered. It is very important to link with a person within an agency before you submit a grant. There is often inside information about the funding process that you can glean only by talking to an employee. Conversations with a program officer will provide an enormous amount of information not be available in the guidelines, at the Web site, or in the literature. Speak with a person or build a relationship via the Internet. Key issues to raise once you are able to set up an interview include:

- Give a brief description of your project (cocktail conversation), and find out if the program officer feels that this fits into the current agenda for the funding cycle.
- Are there any unannounced programs or unsolicited funds to support your project?
- What would they like to see addressed in a proposal that other applicants may have overlooked?
- Would they review a draft proposal if you got it to you early?
- What are the most common mistakes in proposals they receive?
- How are the grants reviewed?
- Do they have any sample successful proposals you can see?

3. In addition to speaking with a foundation, a past grantee can provide you with great in-sights into the process and effective ways to receive funding. Look over the annual report or ask

the foundation officer if you can get the names of people with similar projects, so that you can gain from their experience. Once you have names, contact the grant writer and ask them these questions:

- How close was your initial budget to the awarded amount?
- Did you have a site visit?
- Was there anyone who helped you a lot in the process?
- What was the hardest part of the process and what advice can you give me in addressing this issue?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Do you expect to get funded again?
- What did they like best about your proposal/program?

If you can find the time to call one or two past grantees, it will be of enormous benefit to your cause.

4. Remember who the project is about.

The passion that launched your project can continue to make a difference throughout the process. Teachers tend to be very selfless, giving so much to others directly and indirectly. Asking for help can be a difficult, but remembering it is for the students, other faculty, or community will help you keep the vision, goal and objective in focus.

As you seek funding, build collaborative partners, and promote your work, remember that you are not asking for yourself, but you are asking to help others.

Use examples and research as much as possible.

A well-informed program can gain much wisdom from the mistakes of others. It can also arm itself with an arsenal of solutions to challenges as they arise, if enough similar programs have been researched. The Internet is wonderful. Find three or four target or keywords and stick with them. Find programs that support the work that you are doing in your community, and look at their funding sources, their successes and clientele/location. Build on the similarities, examine the issues and use the information to build your work and give it credibility.

Tip Box 11

Using the Internet

1. **Choose three or four keywords to research your program in advance.**

2. **Set a goal for the number of programs from which to draw information.**

3. **Determine key information you will seek to support your program.**

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5. Keep it simple. Funding personnel have seen a lot of programs and met a lot of people. Trying to impress anyone will do nothing to help your cause. It is better to be honest if you don't know the answer, or haven't thought about the question or concern that is posed to you. Give potential funders hypothetical responses, such as doing "x, y or z," and explain that their query is a valid concern/question, and you have not formally come to a conclusion. Your language in the proposal should not be lavish and ornate, rather be simple and precise.

Thousands of proposals come in to government, foundations or corporations. They can not all be funded. It helps a lot to be concise and organized. You want your proposal to stand out and you want it to be quick and easy to read, with flair not overkill. Never be afraid to ask a question or clarify something you do not understand with a granting entity. They really want to help make the community a better place, as do you.

Good luck!

CHAPTER 9

Additional exercises

Exercise A: Networking

Consider these assignments to help jump start your networking process:

Name five people with whom you have worked in the last two years who liked your work and would seem to be genuinely interested in helping improve your school and community.

    a.   _____

    b.   _____

    c.   _____

    d.   _____

    e.   _____

Identify key personnel at your school to act as an in-house champion, who can put a positive and exciting face your project.

Create a poster to hang in the faculty lounge with your vision, goals and objectives and ask for help with resources, staffing or connections.

Check the local paper to identify editorial staff that may be sympathetic to your cause. Then, contact the individual and get his or her input.

Have an informational meeting on the project in order to get community input and map available assets.

Exercise B: Asset building

Create a list of all your current assets. Each member of your team should list what they are able to donate to the project.1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Exercise C: Cocktail conversation

For the following topic areas, work with a partner to create a cocktail conversation for your program. Spend fifteen minutes coming up with "talking points" for this conversation, then present it in front of others and have them rate you on interest, fundability and clarity.

Topic: 1. Weekend programming for teens at the school.

2. Teacher run and teacher led in-service days.

3. Multi-cultural programming to address "under the carpet" race issues.

Exercise D: Brainstorm

Our nation's schools have a mandate to provide high-quality educational experiences in the arts for all young people. Much like a city attempts to organize its operations and services through laws, planning and financial capital, education in the arts needs the same application. In general, parents, educators, students and others involved believe strongly that arts integration and the arts can impact the youth and families within our communities' schools. However, some districts struggle with communication and application, which significantly limits that impact.

Brainstorm and then jot down ideas on communication and application of arts integration into the school.

Exercise E: Vision, goal and objective

Please fill in the missing segment: vision, goal, or objective.

Vision: _____

_____

Goal: Provide college financial aide services to all students in the district.

Objective: Our pilot program will provide financial aide counseling to every student in grades 9-12, as well as support services for testing, applications and site visits in the next four years.

Vision: End childhood obesity as a major public health problem in our school district.

Goal: _____

Objective: _____

My thoughts...

Vision: Any student in the district who needs financial aide to go to college will receive assistance.

Goal: Educate school staff, and parents about the issues affecting the health of children such as obesity and the mental and emotional development tied to body image.

Objective: Provide students with behavior-focused nutrition education, and integrate into an interactive curriculum (art projects and cooking activities) during the school year via special classes, assemblies and after school and evening programs.
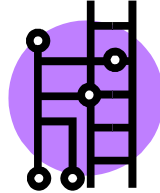
Some Ideas: <u>Step One</u>: 1. Find other programs in the area that are doing the same thing; 2. Find programs on the internet that are working on similar projects; 3. Contact people to find out additional information; 4) Create a grid with relevant information to give out at meetings; 5) list Pros and Cons of researched programs. <u>Step Two</u>: Create a list of potential collaborators; 2) Diagram the collaborator's list to denote what they bring to the table for the partnership; 3) List who you know from these agencies and the best way to approach them; 4) Set up formal and informal meetings to build collaboration; 5) Further define and strategize about partners and assets for the best delivery of the program.

Step One: Research Drug Prevention Programs

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Step Two: Find Partners/Build Collaboration

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

    51

My thoughts...

Step One:

1. Find other programs in the area that are doing the same thing

2. Find programs on the internet that are doing similar or the same things

3. Contact people find out additional information

4. Create a grid with relevant information to give out at meeting on other programs

5. List pros and cons of researched programs.

Step Two:

1. Create a list of potential collaborators

2. Diagram out the list to note what they can bring to the table for the partnership

3. List who you know from these agencies and the best way to approach them

4. Set up formal and informal meetings to build collaboration

5. Further define and strategize about partners and assets for the best delivery of the program.

Exercise G: Creative funding

Name three ways you could find matching funds for the following programs:

After-school art and literacy program.

Find funding for a Smart Board.

My Thoughts...

After-school art and literacy program:

Partner with YMCA for staff costs; partner with local grocer for snacks; and partner with local chain stores for prizes.

Find funding for a Smart Board:

Build program understanding only funding will come for training, smart board, and maintenance; Find several businesses to work with you on costs and provide them with space for training and use of smart board if they need it; and Collaborate with a couple of schools rotating the use of the board.

Exercise H: Using the Internet
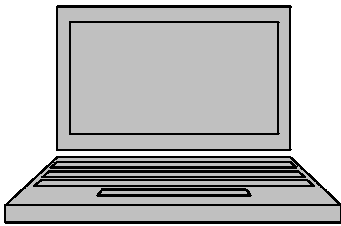
Choose three to four words you could use to best describe your program idea to get accurate and supportive information from the internet on similar programs.

Idea: Mentoring Program

    1.

    2.

    3.

    4.

Idea: Field Trip Enrichment Program (after school)

    1.

    2.

    3.

    4.

My Thoughts...

Mentoring Program:

    1. Mentoring youth

    2. Peer to peer

    3. Advising kids

    4. Tutor

Enrichment Program:

    1. After-school program evaluation

    2. After-school program activities

    3. After-school program guidelines

    4. After-school program enhancement