



Determining What is Core Programming



Meeting Opening

Determining What is Core Programming Session Objectives

- Participants will be introduced to a decision-making framework that can facilitate planning about program
- Participants will learn from one another about additional and useful decision making frameworks or processes



What Does “Core Programming” Mean?

Why try to assess outcomes?

- ▶ Central to mission
- ▶ Most important to our community
- ▶ The reason we exist
- ▶ Our programmatic 'strength'

Why Does Knowing Matter?

- ▶ Helps us to decide how to grow and how to contract- what to keep, what to let go...
- ▶ Facilitates buy-in and communication among key constituencies about our decisions



What Choices Do We Get to Make?

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Nonprofits HAVE CHOICES ABOUT

- ▶ Whether to take a contract
- ▶ Whether and how to partner How to allocate general support funding
- ▶ What gets our time, attention, energy and leadership
- ▶ The time frames for staging or rolling-out programs



How Can We Determine What is Core Programming?



The Short Answer

You And You Stakeholders
Discuss and Agree



The Long Answer

Use A Framework Like
The Macmillan Matrix
To Guide The Conversation



What Is the MacMillan Matrix?

A Framework For
A Competitive Analysis
Of Your Programming
Using Four Key Criteria

Criteria #1: FIT

- ▶ Congruence with purpose and **Mission of the Organization and its Vision for its Future**
- ▶ Ability to Draw on Existing Skills
- ▶ Ability to Leverage Across Programs
- ▶ The Historical Work of the Organization, to which there remains strong connections



A Note About Mission

Does Everything 'Fit'
or are There Clear Parameters?

A Note About Mission

▶ Which Type of Organization are You?

- An umbrella organization that manages and supports multiple, independently operating programs?

- A single organization whose programs all align behind a handful of key outcomes?

▶ “Who Is Your Community?” is an Important Conversation to Have Periodically

- Issue

- Geography

- Population

A Note About Mission

▶ Check In about Whether You Are Living Your Mission

- Consider: This is what we say we are doing, but what are we really doing...?
- How have we changed over the years? Are we handling different issues, are we in different communities? Has our approach evolved?

CRITERIA #2:

Program Attractiveness

- Appealing to Funders
- Stable Funding Sources
- High Demand among Clients
- Other Resources Easily Collected
- Program Results Discernable and Reportable
- Can Discontinue Program Easily if Necessary

CRITERIA #3:

Alternative Coverage

- ▶ Would you be considered, and are you, 'one of many' providing this service, for this community?
- ▶ Would you be considered, and are you, 'one of the few' or the 'only one' operating this program, for this community?


CRITERIA #4:

Competitive Position

- ▶ Superior Track Record and Image of Service Delivery
- ▶ Large Reservoir of Constituent Support
- ▶ Success in Securing Adequate Funding; Ability to Raise Funds for this Program
- ▶ Better Quality Service than Competitors
- ▶ Ability to Monitor and Demonstrate Program Results
- ▶ Superior Technical Skills for Program, Local Contacts and Organizational Skills



What Other Criteria Are Important to You?



How Do You Prepare for a Competitive Analysis of Your Program?

Preparation for Program Analysis

Information:

- What does it really cost to deliver this activity/program? Does our current funding cover those costs? Do they throw off revenue?
- What is the demand for this service among clients?
- How easily do we staff this program - how well does it match our expertise?
- How good are we at this and how do we know?
- How crowded is the 'field' really?

Can you get this info easily? Which info is most critical to your decision making?



Organizing Information about Your Programs

List Several Programs

Think About The Data You Have in Hand...
What Data Would You Need to Develop?

Preparation for Program Analysis

Group Readiness

- Who is the Ideal Group to Do This Work With at Your Organization and Why?
- What Preparation is Needed, if Any, to Ensure that Your Group Engages in the Analysis Using a Perspective that is Broader Than Their Silos?



Preparing for the Program Analysis

Think About the People
You Would Want to Gather
to Engage in this Program Analysis
With You - Why Them?

Assumptions Underlying MacMillan Matrix

- ▶ Mission is Up-to-Date and Relevant
- ▶ Key Data is Accessible
- ▶ There's an Engaged Group of Stakeholders
- ▶ Organization is Ready for 'Objective' Assessment
- ▶ Executive Has Will and Capacity to Lead Change

Steps for Applying the Matrix

- Collect Data About Program
- Involve Key Stakeholders In The Analysis
- Place The Results In The Matrix
- Consider Strategies Based On Placement In Matrix
- Decide On Actions



Table Work: Using the Matrix

List and Rate Several Programs
Place Them in the Matrix
Reflect on the Result

Actions Following Analysis

Divestment: If a program is a 'poor fit' to mission, that is, it is not advancing the purpose of your organization, **why are you spending resources on it?** [Cells 9 & 10]

▲ **Compete:** If you have particularly strong competency in delivering a program and if it has steady funding sources that cover its true costs but there are many other solid programs delivering this same service to the same community, work on further improving your program. **Distinguish yourselves** in order to attract new investments and ensure sustainability or **concentrate elsewhere.** [Cell 1]

▲ **Position for Growth:** If you have particularly strong competency in delivering a program and steady funding sources that cover its true costs, **AND** the need for it in your community outstrips existing supply, **work to grow this program at first opportunity.** [Cell 2]

Actions Following Analysis

- ▶ **Build Strength:** If need for the program outstrips existing supply and its revenue covers expenses, but in truth your program is not an outstanding model, focus on energies on improving its quality in order to ensure sustainability. [Cell 4]
- ▶ **Build Up Best Competitor:** If you have particularly strong competency in delivering a program but revenue sources historically have not covered its true costs and there are many other solid programs delivering this same service to the same community, **share your expertise with the agency best positioned to grow the service.** [Cell 5]

Actions Following Analysis

- ▶ **Soul of the Agency:** If you have particularly strong competency in delivering a program and need for it in your community outstrips existing supply BUT revenue sources historically have not covered its true costs, **consider whether you afford to keep it. [Cell 6]**
- ▶ **Joint Ventures:** If need for the program outstrips existing supply, but in truth your program is not an outstanding model and revenue sources historically have not covered true costs, **consider collaboration with a partner with strong expertise and work together to attract additional funding. [Cell 8]**



What's the Connection to Contingency Planning?

Where Does This Leave You?

Actions Following Analysis

- Matrix Placement Triggers Conversation About
 - What to Grow
 - What to Strengthen
 - What to Transition Out of Quickly or Slowly
 - How Many 'Soul of the Agency' Programs You Can Afford to Keep, etc.
- Matrix Allows You to Easily Identify Critical Issues Regarding Program Development
- Matrix Gives You Perspective and a Starting Place for More Focused Planning



Mission/Budget Fit Matrix

A First level Analysis



Other Questions?
Other Resources?