

Community Connections

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Agenda

- Introductions
- Why do we need partnerships
- Making and Strengthening connections
- Basic Principles for connection
- Making a plan for partnership
- Examples of success stories
- Using partnerships to find funding
- Reflection and sharing

Why are Connections important?

- Improving the services you offer
- Building an image in the community
- Increasing opportunities for funding/programs

How do you establish connections?

Meetings, meetings and more meetings

- Collaboratives have been set up by 21st century grants
- Advisory committees for the mayor, cable television, etc.
- Literacy coalitions or networks in your community
- Networks for related fields – mentoring
- United Way impact council or other committees
- Local boards
- Business breakfast
- Your ideas

Your job is your interruptions

Develop relationships

- Meet with people over lunch or breakfast
- Find a champion for your cause and solicit their help and influence
- Give and you will receive (scratch backs when you can)
- Invite a potential partner to events as speakers
- Collect and distribute business cards
- Send handwritten notes
- Send emails to follow up on calls, conversations

Connection principles

- One connection often leads to another so make the most of every opportunity
- The more communication, the stronger the connection
- Everyone wants to know what is in it for them, so make sure you know before you ask.
- Co-location can be extremely valuable

Use boards to multiply connections

- You can't do it alone – don't even try
- Use a board of directors or advisory board to add influence and connections automatically
- Communicate to them the information they need to know to make a literacy case

Build recognition for your cause

- Get to know key people at the newspaper
 - Letters to the editor
 - Features around holidays when news is light
- Distribute your annual report
- Make presentations to service clubs
- Hold events or participate in events

Remember people like to help

- Put your foot in a door by starting with a small request and building on that
- Don't be afraid to ask for in-kind support
- Use your connection to families and children because people give with their hearts not their minds

You have to know what you want before you can get it

- Develop a partnership plan – who do you want as a partner and what do you want them to do?
- Make sure it is consistent with your objectives
- Be strategic about your partnerships
- You can make almost anyone a partner with persistence and creativity

Our Partnership Plan

- Found a champion (or two)
- Met with partner
- Found out their goals and how related to literacy
- Tailored what we said to their goals
- Asked for input/assistance
- Followed up with emails

Develop a partnership plan

You are who you have as a partner. Protect your reputation and that of your partner

Success Stories

- A contract to provide services to welfare to work clients came through short conversation with county welfare director
- Now working with five school districts to provide nine family literacy programs plus adult classes for Evenstart through connections
- Now working with Family Resource Centers to provide adult literacy

Non-profits make good partners

Contracting with a non-profit to provide service works well for government and education because programs can be provided faster and cheaper

Workplace Literacy

Businesses should contribute financially because they are benefiting economically.

Do your homework – be able to show how your program will improve the bottom line

Have this attitude

The services of your agency are valuable and worth paying for!
Just Ask!



Seek to diversify funding

- Federal funding
- State and local funding
- Fees and contracts
- Donations (the most flexible and the most potential for increase)

Combining funds

Look for programs with overlaps that can be combined.

Example:

Family literacy programs can incorporate adult education funding, after school funding and Prop. 10 funding for its different components.

Things to consider

- Allowed by funding source
- Good record keeping
 - Time cards that break down by funding
 - Data management of students
 - Financial software to track funding for a variety of sources
 - Cost allocation plans to keep overhead costs attributed evenly and legally

More considerations

- Form a middle layer of management to oversee each program area and make sure programs meet obligations
- Combine assessment and outcome measurement tools to minimize strain on teachers and other workers

Partnerships and Funding

Two key elements to a healthy and growing organization

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