

2009-10 Action Learning Projects Abstracts

The Agency Executives Association

“Beginning the Reflective Search for a Purpose and Path(s)”

This project explored the need for defining organizational purpose, the impact untested assumptions and fearful communication patterns have upon identity development and effectiveness, and highlights fundamental choices that often result from an objective investigation of such matters. In this instance, the ALT project reveals that the AEA has the freedom to pursue many purposes, however it must put forth the effort to choose and pursue them.

Project Partner Statement

The work produced by the ALT provides the AEA with an “objective” view of a historical and valuable structure in our service community. Having the team ask the questions and try to understand what is driving the work and energy of the active membership will serve the AEA to springboard into a critical dialogue that can shape its future. Bringing together perceptions and reality is a great service.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

“To Tweet or Not to Tweet: Guiding Big Brothers/Big Sisters Through the Social Media Landscape”

The problem that was presented to Team Kudzu by Big Brothers Big Sisters Services, Inc (BBBS), is an issue that is currently being played out in corporate marketing departments and non-profit boardrooms across the country – *whether and how to use social media to add value to their operation*. BBBS was searching for guidance as to whether sites such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace might be viable and productive options to better serve their clients and stakeholders. With goals that included increased connectivity between their Bigs and Littles, recruitment of volunteers, community awareness, and education, there was a sense of urgency to their request for help.

Crosby Scholars Program Equity Plus Schools

“Completion Rate Project”

The issue to be addressed was to understand why students enrolled in equity plus schools are not completing the program at the same rate as the other schools and provide recommendation for opportunities to improve the success rate at equity plus schools.

Project Partner Statement

The committee’s findings have given us some ideas to consider as we enter into the planning stages for next year’s programs. We will consider offering more after school academy programs and try to develop more community service opportunities for our students. We will include the committee’s findings in funding proposals citing the recommendations of the committee. Having an outside group make these recommendations based on independent surveys and analysis will add credibility to funding applications.

Downtown Health Plaza

“How to Increase Compliance with Doctor’s Orders to Access Prescription Medication as Scheduled”

The project dilemma was one of confusion. Patients and providers alike were unclear on how to get patients access to their prescription medication to increase compliance. We created a clear path for patients and providers with an orientation session for providers; information cards, videos and handouts for both patients and providers; bold signage promoting increased use of DHP Pharmacy and a more effective tracking system for patients and patient referrals.

Project Partner Statement

The DHP staff members were very impressed with the professional presentation by the LWS Project Team regarding the DHP Pharmacy utilization project. This project dovetails with a grant we are working on that will fund patient navigator positions to help patients access medications as noted in the LWS presentation. We will also use the signage suggestions, something that can happen quickly with maximum impact.



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Diggs Gallery

"Creating a Legacy for Another Generation"

Our team was asked to look at the Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University with an eye toward helping the institution move into the 21st century. We studied other, similar galleries and developed a series of recommendations aimed at helping Diggs grow over the long term by doing more in areas such as financing, staffing and marketing. The goal that we developed for Diggs Gallery was to help it become the "comfortable living room" for both WSSU and the community at large.

Forest Park Elementary School

"Leadership Development for Students & Parents"

The task was to create a program to support leadership development, social, and personal competence for students at Forest Park Elementary School. The team created a scheduled program that focuses on leadership traits that corresponds to each month of the school year with speaker resources and activities.

Project Partner Statement

Great job! Blends well with what we are already doing. Adaptable for teachers and each grade level. Doesn't add work to the teacher. It will be easy to build on to and will grow quickly.

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter

"Identify the Barriers to Earlier Accessing of Hospice Services"

The team was asked by Hospice & Palliative CareCenter to identify the barriers to earlier accessing of hospice services and make recommendations to overcome those barriers. We did both primary and secondary research on the project including (i) a general public survey; (ii) a physician survey; (iii) one-on-one interviews with medical professionals, counselors, and a hospice patient; and (iv) general research of secondary resources. We prepared and delivered to Hospice & Palliative CareCenter a PowerPoint presentation identifying our research, our findings, and our recommendations, as well as a 9-minute videotape presentation of highlights from the one-on-one interviews.

Project Partner Statement

Our action learning team took our project to heart and delivered more than we expected! Their research, surveys and one-on-one interviews armed them with enough data and insight to deliver a comprehensive marketing plan - complete with recommendations that will absolutely be implemented by Hospice & Palliative CareCenter.

Winston-Salem Symphony

"Promote Awareness & Ticket Sales Among "Non-Traditional" Audiences"

The Winston-Salem Symphony was challenged with effectively promoting awareness and ticket sales among "non-traditional" audiences including young people, families, more ethnically diverse audiences, and audiences with musical tastes that may or may not include classical music. This needed to be accomplished within the confines of a very limited marketing and promotional budget.

Project Partner Statement

The Winston-Salem Symphony Action Learning Team's key deliverables included:

1. Convening of a young professionals focus group around a concert to seek feedback about the appeal of the Kicked-Back Classics Series to this targeted demographic; and
2. Formation of a new Kicked-Back Classics Council to help target this series' content and approach to enhance its appeal to young professionals. Formation of the Council included recruitment of the Council's initial membership from among representatives of 11 diverse regional young professionals groups.

The Symphony intends to incorporate this new Council into its advisory structure as a permanent addition to its community engagement efforts.