



2010-11 Action Learning Projects Abstracts

BOOKMARKS

“Membership Recruitment and Benefits”

This project explored the need to evaluate the current membership benefits and solicitation activities of **BOOKMARKS**. A clearer picture of what would draw more interests from current members, and hopefully draw in new members, was established by an online survey created by the team. This, along with other research, assisted in creating new strategies to help the organization move forward, including: enhanced membership benefits at each level and brochure and website recommendations.

Project Partner Statement

Thank you for offering this opportunity for personal growth and community service. It is our sincere hope that we have fulfilled the mission of Leadership Winston-Salem: *“Educating, connecting and energizing leaders to serve and improve the community.”*

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Forsyth County

“Bringing a FACE to a Local Consumer-Help Agency”

Due to an increase in demand for their services, loss of funding and rising costs, CCCS of Forsyth County needed to raise awareness of the value they bring to the community and also raise money. CCCS is not just a debt reduction service. They assist seniors, new homebuyers and teach financial literacy. A name change to Financial Advisors and Consumer Educators (FACE) was suggested to better reflect the agency as such. Donors are greatly appreciated and the team recommended applying for a program to analyze whether the agency should recruit more high-profile civic leaders to assist with fundraising. Also, the FACE theme works great as a marketing catch phrase, and who knows maybe we'll see it at a donor Gala soon!

The Community Care Center

“Visibility and Recognition”

The Action Learning Team accomplished several public relations initiatives during this project. To increase visibility to the public, the team came up with the idea of sending out quarterly press releases, e-newsletters, a few website modifications and establishing relationships with other local organizations. The CCC could soon see a larger number of volunteers at their enhanced volunteer recognition events as well. The Mayor even recognized the hard work of the team and the new implementations so he declared May 12 Community Care Center Day!

Dress for Success Winston-Salem

“Financial Sustainability in a Financially Unstable World”

After much communication within the team and with DFSWS, they focused their attention on financial sustainability. Small group discussions helped the team narrow in on strategic planning, corporate giving, and donor development. A detailed report followed, which provided DFSWS with instructions and multiple resources to allow them to grow as a non-profit. Even though the team worked together as a group, each had a different experience that has re-shaped their personal perspectives.

Project Partner Statement

"The Board of Dress for Success Winston-Salem is thrilled with the work that our LWS Action Team did on our behalf. We plan to hold a board retreat in September with our goal being to work through at least the first stages of our strategic planning process. We really appreciate all of the tools the team included in our final guide to strategic and financial planning. I don't think there is any doubt that we will be a better organization because of what they have accomplished." – Mary T. Gerardy, Board Chair, Dress for Success: Winston-Salem.



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Forsyth Humane Society “Pet Ownership”

The team was to develop a program to educate students in grades K-2 about responsible pet ownership and the humane treatment of animals. The program consists of FHS staff and volunteers presenting an interactive presentation along with in-class games and take-home work. A teaching manual for the course was also created to help train new staff and volunteers in presenting the program.

HandsOn Northwest North Carolina “Board Bank”

The task here was to determine whether a board bank would be useful to the nonprofit and volunteer leader communities. Research was conducted by interviewing community leaders, checking out existing board banks, and conducting a survey on existing non-profits in the HandsOn service area. Their findings confirmed there was a need for a board bank and one with the capabilities to provide training and a “matchmaking service” to match individuals with specific NPOs.

Project Partner Statement

HandsOn is very appreciative of the work that was done and the report and discussion that followed. We felt that it was a great validation of our own research and contained many practical suggestions that are implementable. In particular, we appreciated the phased implementation approach and the easily-referenced format that was provided.

The City of Winston-Salem

“Economic Development Revolving Loan Program”

The team was asked to develop a survey for the City of Winston-Salem’s Community and Business Development Department to assess the revolving loan program in similar cities. The results, along with the team’s research, were compiled in a report that was delivered to the City. Variation in multiple areas, like the application process and follow-up, made it difficult to compare the program across cities. The team recommended simplifying the loan application and reporting requirements, building awareness through networking, and streamlining communication.

Project Partner Statement

The City of Winston-Salem will review the best practices of peer communities and evaluate them for possible incorporation into our existing small business financial assistance programs and services. We may also benefit from learning new ways to market and administer the programs.

Work Family Resource Center

“An Analysis to Grow Fee-Based Services”

The WFRC is looking at expanding their fee-based services to benefit smaller companies. The team was tasked with constructing a survey for small to medium-sized businesses in the Triad area to determine the likelihood of utilization for WFRC’s services. The results were presented to the board and profoundly, 81.8% of the companies surveyed were not familiar with WFRC. However, even though this was an untapped market, only 10% were interested in the services and a majority would only be willing to pay on a per-use basis rather than sign a contractual agreement. The team felt that restructuring and using a marketing specialist could help spread the word about their services and generate future business.