

Children's Museum of Winston-Salem (CMWS)

"Benchmarking Membership Package Study"

Synopsis

In its 10th anniversary year, CMWS asked our Action Learning Team to prepare a benchmarking study of membership packages for local and similarly sized museums to support the goals of growing membership and revenues. Our dilemma was that this request seemed enormous in scope. After exploring options to support growth that extended beyond best-practice membership packages, we focused our final recommendations on three areas: new membership program options; low-cost, "out-of-the box" ideas for attracting and retaining new members; and the incorporation of new technology into back-room operations to help manage and leverage customer information and data.

Project Partner Statement

"It has been a pleasure working with our LWS group. They have been very thoughtful in their project recommendations and not just about what we initially asked them to do, but in thinking long term, big picture and strategically. As I said to them, many of their recommendations can't happen overnight – some are doable and some may not be. But, more importantly they have given our organization something much like LWS strives to do – information that is informative, in depth and robust that has whet our appetite for more discussion and research, and an opportunity for courageous conversations as we move forward. Thank you." - Elizabeth Dampier, Executive Director, Children's Museum of Winston-Salem

Clemmons Food Pantry

"Transitioning to a Client Choice Model of Food Distribution"

Synopsis

Feeding America, the governing organization for food banks and pantries, set client choice as a strategic goal in 2010. The Clemmons Food Pantry was struggling with how to transition from a "pre-bagged" system of food distribution to this client choice model. Through site visits at multiple pantries, on-line research, focus groups with volunteers, and meetings with the board, our team was able to develop a workable, multi-step "hybrid" plan to aid in the success of this transition.

Project Partner Statement

"The Clemmons Food Pantry Board was very impressed with the team's priority of listening to understand our operational challenge, the needs of the clients and the concerns of our volunteers and board members. The commitment the team has made to our project has been clear every step of the way." - Debi Boyce, Clemmons Food Pantry, Board Member

Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministries

"Community Engagement & Marketing Plan to increase younger volunteer involvement"

Synopsis

Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministries has a desire to lower the average age of their current volunteer base and find more ways to engage family members of those incarcerated. In order to address this need, our Action Learning team developed a comprehensive community engagement plan. This plan offers goals and steps related to both external and internal communications, as well as recommendations on how to utilize internships.

Project Partner Statement

"The Leadership Winston-Salem team assigned to our organization's project was very thorough and creative. The team's diverse backgrounds brought great insight and recommendations to address our request. They have provided us an extensive marketing plan to attract younger volunteers." – Jone Reid, Director, Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministry

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter

“Bridging the Communication Gap – Communication, Engagement & Ownership”

Synopsis

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter (HPCC) requested assistance in the development of an internal/employee communication plan. HPCC is committed to a team-based environment in the clinical environment as well as in the administrative environment. HPCC has experienced a significant amount of growth and change with multiple locations, diversity in staff and increasing numbers of employees in a variety of work settings. The changes called for updates in effective communication among all levels.

Our Action Learning Team presented HPCC with tools to implement a comprehensive plan suited for the needs of the diverse locations and worker groups. Through a thorough analysis of employee survey data, interviews with senior management, and onsite interviews at the main location and all satellite locations, the Action Learning Team identified best current practices, areas for improvement, and future communication plan implementation. A sample communication plan template was the final deliverable to HPCC.

Project Partner Statement

- The goal of our proposal was essentially to improve upon current communication efforts and develop better employee engagement. Huge moving target!
- Our Action Learning Team brought fresh eyes to an old/recurring organizational dilemma.
- They were able to scope down the project to a more manageable level by interviewing, analyzing and approaching the issues in an impartial manner.
- We invited the entire Action Learning Team to our monthly Leadership meeting to present their findings so that our entire team had a better understanding of the process and final product.
- Having a neutral third-party (community partner) working directly with us was a gift!
- We are highly satisfied with the Internal Communication Plan template developed for us and appreciate all the time, energy and talent that each brought to our project.

IMPRINTS

Synopsis

Overall, our biggest challenge started in the scope of the work. While initially we thought it was a re-branding project, the sponsor was not interested in changing the name of the organization. This posed two challenges for our group: 1) the name of the organization, and subsequent sub-names for various programs within the larger organization was not intuitive or easy to understand for those external to the organization; and 2) the organization is involved in many activities that vary greatly, all linked to building stronger families, but in many diverse ways. It was challenging for our group to understand all these various activities, but the mission of clearly communicating these programs under one brand to the general public seemed very challenging. Our team met with the IMPRINTS leadership team early and discussed their challenges and ultimately their goals for their organization. We quickly finalized and defined the scope of our work, which ultimately was more about generating revenue for less grant reliance than re-branding. Once this scope was defined, our objectives were clear and we were able to deliver on those objective. We believe this was the most critical step in our collaborative work with our project partner.

Project Partner Statement

“Last year, when I heard about Action Learning Project opportunity, I thought, “Aha, what better than a group of local community business leaders to tackle the IMPRINTS rebrand challenge?” And, what an honor it was to be selected among other organizations valued in our community. The journey exceeded our expectations. A powerful, thoughtful and insightful ALP group embraced IMPRINTS resulting in new perspectives on our business. Thank you is an understatement as I leave you with a few impressions from key leadership at IMPRINTS.” - Melissa Payton, IMPRINTS Business Development Director

“This experience with the ALP team has energized our staff, our board and our volunteers—boosting excitement and support for the IMPRINTS rebrand strategy and growth plans. These fresh ideas will assist in increasing our outreach to children and their families. I am grateful to our wonderful ALP group for contributing to our mission of building a strong foundation for children's success in school and life. I look forward to continued relationships as we collectively strengthen the fabric of our community.” - Nikki Byers, IMPRINTS Executive Director

“The ALP team took great care in understanding Imprints Cares extended learning programs further taking the time to visit a school so they could witness our teachers and our students learning in action together. They’ve validated my focus providing specific recommendations to grow current school enrollments, to open doors in new schools and to move our business to a partnership level. Sincerely thank each and every one on the ALP team.” - Betty West, Imprints Cares Director

“I was excited when IMPRINTS was selected by Leadership WS. And, thrilled with the final result that this group took the time to understand the dynamics of the IMPRINTS organization. The analysis was thorough, clearly organized and communicated well to the staff and board. A number of their recommendations have great potential and I fully expect them to be implemented. Thank you for selecting IMPRINTS and providing a clear and comprehensive end product.”

- Susan Rayner, IMPRINTS Board Executive

Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network (PDSSN)

“Board Manual”

Synopsis

The Action Learning Team spoke with the newly appointed Executive Director of PDSSN and discovered that the board: 1) needed additional training, 2) were experiencing burnout, and 3) there was no succession plan to adequately develop a strong, diverse, and cohesive board. Furthermore, there was no roadmap to identify current skill gaps and no direction regarding recruiting, training, and mentoring current or potential board members.

Youth In Transition Initiative Forsyth County

“The Independent Living Guide”

Synopsis

Many young adults transitioning out of foster care have not had the opportunity to learn necessary independent-living skills and are not equipped to successfully navigate the challenges of the adult world. Their lack of independent-living skills is often magnified by the traumatic experiences some of these individuals have faced, ranging from undiagnosed mental illness to physical abuse. This combination creates a population that is in dire need of the tools to create a safe and stable living environment. Deliverables: an Independent Living Guide – each section represents a key area that young adults will need to survive on their own and successfully contribute as a community member; and a Coaching Framework – ideally, each youth presented with the Independent Living Guide will also be assigned a coach to work with in the short term, and hopefully develop a relationship that can continue in the long term.

Project Partner Statement

“It has been a great privilege to watch this team work through the year. They have faithfully engaged in this task and their understanding about the challenges and needs for young people coming out of foster care have grown tremendously. Our intention is to use the final product as a framework and resource guide for our participants while they are in a supportive housing setting. It will also provide us with a key resource to support volunteers who will work one-on-one with our participants. We are excited to have this resource and are confident it will lead to a better path to adulthood for young people who were in foster care.” - Alex Hudson, Executive Director, Youth In Transition Initiative Forsyth County