

Defining Capacity Building and Collaboration Results

PARTICIPANT AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESULTS – What defines success?

When nonprofits seek investment to build their capacity or collaborative efforts, organizational results that increase their efficiency and/or their effectiveness are what they commit to achieving in order to justify the investment. Organizational results and the benefits to those being served are defined in advance of "doing business," and they must be tangible, verifiable, and within the realm of possibility for a nonprofit to influence itself or in collaboration with others.

Building an organizational result – a 4-step sequence for your thinking.

These four steps followed in sequence, will help you devise your result:

1. Identify the changes in behavior or condition you seek;
2. Specify the degree of change you consider a success;
3. Estimate how many participants *will* change in what ways and by when; and
4. Use a result sentence structure to express your result by a specific date.

Step 1. Identify *the kind of change* you seek for your organization.

Setting the result for change implies some comparison to current or expected behavior or condition of your participants and/or organization:

- *Increase our unrestricted funding*
- *Offer mental health services to our current clients*
- *Lower staff turnover*

Step 2. Specify *how much change* is required for you to consider it a success.

Your result must consider the question of degree... how much change; change maintained for how long; a condition with certain *minimum requirements* achieved. When you can clearly articulate this you have developed the content language of your participant or organizational result. Some examples:

- *Increase our donor contributions by 20% and increase donor retention by at least 10%*
- *Collaboration with at least two mental health organizations to provide mental health services to our current clients*
- *Reduce staff turnover from 12% to 5%*

Step 3. Using the specific change you identified from the previous page, *estimate the new capacity and when you expect it to be achieved.*

To be effective, your results must have a number attached to it...kind and degree of change is not enough. This is the step that some find the most difficult; the question is:



how much cost savings or new revenues do you expect and by when? Some examples:

Increasing our donor contributions by 20% and donor retention by 10% will increase our operating revenues by \$50,000 by the end of 2016.

Through our collaboration with two mental health organizations, we will serve 200 incarcerated participants who have mental health issues in 2016.

A reduction in turnover from 12% to 5% will save us an additional \$28,000 in 2016 that we would otherwise spend to hire train and retain new staff.

Step 4. Express how these changes will improve results for those you serve and by when.

Increase in the number served:

As a result of our increased donor contributions and retention, we will be able to serve an addition 100 participants in 2016.

Increased results for those served:

Through our collaboration with two mental health organizations, 100 incarcerated participants with mental health issues will be stable and successfully reenter the community in 2016.

Increase in the number served:

With our reduced turnover, our employees will be a more consistent presence on the lives of our participants, resulting in an increase in the number that significantly improve their academic performance from 30 to 45 annually.

Step 5. Combine results into one statement:

Increasing our donor contributions by 20% and donor retention by 10% will increase our operating revenues by \$50,000 by the end of 2016 enabling us to serve an additional 100 participants in 2016.