

Hosting a Town Hall Meeting, cont'd

Overview: Organizational Effectiveness Priority Piece For facilitator only; not to be handed out to participants

Agenda

Section	Time Needed
Setting the Context	5 minutes
Intro to Organizational Assessment Tool	5 minutes
Organizational Assessment	10 minutes
Peer Learning and Coaching	25 minutes
National Feedback	10 minutes
Evaluation and Closing or Transition to Priority Piece	5 minutes
Total Time	60 minutes

Handouts

- Organizational Strengths & Needs Assessment (side 1) & Examples of Strengths & Needs (side 2)

Materials Needed

- Easel, flipchart, marking pens, masking tape
- Copies of the Evaluation Form for everyone

★ **HELPFUL HINT** | Aim for a balance of participants from various generations in order to have a wide array of strengths and needs at the meeting.

Facilitator's Guide - Organizational Effectiveness Priority Piece

A Behind-The-Scenes Manual (do not hand out to participants)

Note: Sample wording has been provided in quotations below. Text in italics indicates actions to be taken by the facilitator(s).

Setting the Context

5 minutes

"For the next hour or so we'll be talking about **Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness**. This priority emphasizes Accountability and Leadership.

This means that the nonprofit sector has the resources it needs to serve communities and is effectively and efficiently managed, with an emphasis on effective and strong mission-driven leadership.

One of the biggest untapped resources at our fingertips are our colleagues – all the people in this room who can help us run our organizations more efficiently and develop ourselves as leaders. Today, we are going to identify some of our organizational needs and strengths, spend time brainstorming with a colleague on those needs, and develop a list of tips and ideas we all can use. We will wrap up the session by identifying resources on leadership, accountability, and best practices that the national office can work on developing."

Intro to the Organizational Assessment Tool

5 minutes

"We're going to start with an opportunity for you all to brag a little bit about yourself and your organization. The first thing I want you to think about is something you're good at, professionally. It could be public speaking, strategic thinking or writing. What do you excel at in your professional life? To give you a minute to think, I'm going to share one of my strengths."

Ask 2-3 others to share their strengths.

Organizational Assessment

10 minutes

"Now that you've thought about your personal strengths, we want to expand this question out to the organizational level. This is an Organizational Strengths and Needs Assessment for you each to fill out."

Hand out Attachment A – DO NOT hand it out before this portion of the Town Hall.

"First, list the strengths of your organization: what do you do well as a nonprofit? Think in terms of skills and knowledge base. For instance, maybe you use social media well or develop leaders among your staff.

Then, think specifically about your organization's needs. Again, think skills. We all need funding of course, but maybe you need to learn how to cultivate large donors. Maybe you need to learn to use social networking effectively. In other words, what kinds of things could you learn from another nonprofit professional?"

Allow 5 to 7 minutes for participants to complete this sheet. If they get stumped, refer them to the other side of Attachment A: Examples of Strengths and Needs.

Peer Learning and Coaching

25 minutes

“Now that you’ve identified some strengths and needs of your organization, you’re going to find a partner who can help you work on them. Please choose one strength and one need that you can share with the others at your table in a minute. After everyone at your table has shared, break into pairs and move to sit next to each other if necessary.

At that point, you’ll each have a partner matched to you based on strengths and needs and we will spend some time peer learning from each other. The matches don’t have to be perfect; you’ll be able to learn from or coach anyone at your table. You’ll take turns sharing what your organization needs and getting ideas from your partner on how to address that need. One person will peer “coach” the other for 10 minutes. Then I will call time and you will switch roles for another 10 minutes.

I ask that you really engage in active listening with your partner: focus in on what he/she is saying and try not to interrupt too much except to ask probing, not leading, questions. Remember, you will get your own chance to be listened to when we switch.”

After 10 minutes, call time so that the pairs can switch off.

National Feedback

10 minutes

“As we talked about in the beginning, we can each serve as a resource to others in our community. Of course, we also need information and resources from outside this community to help us do our work. Keeping in mind your organization’s needs, let’s brainstorm a list of informational or educational resources that we need to have. Please think specifically in terms of nonprofit organizational effectiveness, leadership, accountability and best practices.”

Record all ideas on a piece of flip chart people at the front of the room.

“We will now vote on the top three resources we need and we will send that information to the national office. They will gather all the feedback from all over the nation and begin working on what we ask for. Each person gets one votes.”

Go through the list, one item at a time, and ask for votes (or ask each person for their top item). Note the number of votes for each item next to it on the list. After the Town Hall is complete, include the top three needed resources in your Town Hall summary to send to the National Council of Nonprofits.

Wrap-up and Closing or Transition to Another Priority Piece

5 minutes

“Hopefully, you’ve found this session useful in identifying some of the people in this community that serve as a resource for you. You can use this type of exercise to flesh out your own personal leadership plan and think about those whom you can develop as leaders as well.

Thank you for your hard work!”

Optional follow-up

Gather the lists of strengths and needs from participants, with their names attached. Compile them and send them out to the group along with everyone’s contact information for future reference.

Priority Piece: Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational Strengths and Needs Assessment

What **STRENGTHS** or skills does your organization have that would benefit others?

What **NEEDS** does your organization have to augment its own growth and pursue its mission?

Priority Piece: Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness

Examples of Strengths and Needs

Strengths to Share, Knowledge to Spare

- Excellent relationships with funders
- Always stays within budget
- Hosts great meetings or training
- Creates leaders among staff members
- High retention of staff
- Utilizes social networking effectively
- Understands how to engage younger staffers
- Relationships with local artists and musicians
- Understanding of public policy process
- Trained in collaborative decision-making
- Can put current crises into historical perspective
- Expertise in a particular issue area
- Good at finding/selecting talented people to hire
- Good at developing a vision and doing strategic planning

Needs to Know, Hopes to Grow

- Need to acquire or learn any of the things listed above
- Want to start a blog or revamp a website
- Want to work on cultivating large donors, members, etc.
- Want to develop better relationship with funders
- Want to create/expand a circle of organizations who do similar work
- Want to develop a transition plan for the organization
- Want to learn conflict resolution
- Want to learn how to balance work properly among staff
- Want to develop more leaders of color and/or women leaders in the organization
- Want to be able to recruit and retain qualified leaders