

OL 241 Assignment Five Homework

Online Learning. OL 241 How to Write a Community Climate Action Plan:

<https://csd-i.org/climate-change/climate-change-action-plan-241/>

Center for Sustainable Development: <https://csd-i.org>

This week's resources:

Assignment Five Discussion

Magee Example Project Assignment Five

Assignment 5.

- Asking for feedback on the Climate Action Plan from your community
- Assessing your organization's expertise or managing the planned activities.
- Make an appointment with a donor for next week

Part 1. Feedback from the community.

In getting feedback from the community, all that you will need is to organize a 30 minute meeting with a few of the community members that participated in the needs assessment.

Discuss your Assignment 3 Project Outline and Project Goal with them. At this stage don't get into a lot of detail. Listen to their reactions, answer any questions that they may have. Long-term sustainability depends on their buy-in and ownership of the project.

How do they feel about the design? Do they suggest changes? Had you misinterpreted anything? Can you make small modifications to details in the project without seriously changing the project?

Part 2. List of project consultants and working partners

In the first three weeks we had a lot of fun meeting with communities and designing our dream projects. In week 4 we may have had a bit of a surprise when we discovered through research that our favorite project activity has never shown evidence of having worked in the field to solve our community's problem.

In Assignment 6 we will be sharing our projects with donors for their feedback. Donors can be unusually helpful in fine-tuning a project; they have seen a lot of projects and have a sense of what works and what doesn't.

Two of the things that they are quite picky about are experience and expertise. One nonprofit that took the course approached a donor with a point-of-use water filter project; the nonprofit was very excited about their project design. The donor asked a lot of questions about their experience in working with water filters in communities – and was surprised to find out that their expertise was actually in reforestation projects – not in water filters.

In order to help you avoid an embarrassing situation like this, Part Two of this assignment is to make a list of aspects of your project activities where you and your nonprofit have insufficient experience or expertise. I would like you to make a three-tabled column:

1. The first column is the list of potentially problematic activities.
2. The second is your solution to finding expertise for each activity, (list one of these three things: 1. hire an expert, specialist consultant, or 2. partner with an experienced nonprofit, or 3. Partner with a governmental agency (examples could be an agency like the USDA or the forest service).
3. The third column is who might these consultants or partners be – or where might you find them?

Examples where I have seen course participants run into challenges include health projects, all types of water projects (especially if they include infrastructure or construction), and connecting farmers to market projects.

This short process will ensure that you aren't caught unprepared in a donor meeting.

For a nonprofit to submit a project in an area where they don't have expertise is perfectly normal. Frequently nonprofits with complementary expertise partner with each other, frequently nonprofits hire expert consultants, and frequently nonprofits hire specialists for the duration of the project. This just needs to be clearly spelled out in your proposal and budget for the donor to be satisfied.

Part 3. Make an appointment with a donor for next week.

This week I would like you to make a list of three important people that you could share your project with. In making your list it is essential to identify influential people with missions similar to yours.

I would highly recommend trying to make an appointment with a donor for next week. Even in rural areas, many donors will have offices (like the USDA for example). If you're thinking about visiting a donor you can go to their website and find out what kind of projects they invest in and what their project requirements are. You can also ask colleagues for recommendations; often an introduction from a mutual acquaintance can help you set up a meeting.

But if it is impossible for you to meet with a donor I would suggest making an appointment for next week with your boss, a member of the Board of Directors of your organization, or if you're a student one of your professors. You can explain that this is an initial project concept, and that you are hoping to receive feedback on it before you continue with its development.

The homework to turn in will be:

1. A short paragraph summarizing any comments that your community may have had about your project concept.
2. A three column table with a list of activities of project consultants and working partners
3. A list of three people that you could visit, the name of the person you chose to make an appointment with for next week, the organization they work for, and their job title.

Go to Magee's Example Project Assignment Five to see what this could look like.

See you next week.

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