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A Legacy of Leadership in Criminal Justice

Sustaining a Grant-Supported Criminal Justice Initiative

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Pop Quiz

When Should You Start Thinking about Sustainability?

1. When you prepare your grant closeout report?
2. When you begin evaluating your program?
3. When you begin implementing your program?
4. When you complete formal planning of your program?
5. As early as you possibly can!

Three Immutable Laws of Federal Grants

- They are hard to get.
- They are a challenge to implement.
- They will come to an end.

How you prepare for your grant's end will largely determine whether your grant-supported activities thrive, merely continue, or cease to exist.

A Simple Equation for Successful Sustainability

Sustainability=

Evaluation

+

Partnerships

+

Project Management

+

Communication

Evaluation

Establishing proof of the effectiveness of your initiative:

- **Is the initiative well-documented?**
- **Have the initiative's goals been met?**
- **Is the initiative cost effective?**
- **Are the outcomes good enough to break the inertia of doing “business as usual”?**

Evaluation provides the business case to justify the continuation of your initiative.

Partnerships

Building strong partnerships support your initiative by:

- **Increasing resources**
- **Adding expertise**
- **Broadening perspectives**
- **Fostering greater investment in & commitment to the project.**

Strong partnerships fuel the project and provide the energy needed to continue them.

Project Management

Sound project management practices help you sustain a project by:

- **Keeping the project team organized & on task.**
- **Defeating the “Iron Triangle” challenges of time, scope, and budget.**
- **Fostering greater investment in & commitment to the project.**

Employing sound project management practices provides a roadmap to program sustainability.

Communication

Effective communication with all relevant stakeholders is essential to the sustainability of a program:

- **Internal Partners (project manager, project team, partnering organizations leadership).**
- **Intermediate Partners (funders, policy makers, community leaders, partnering organizations).**
- **External Partners (the media, community members, the general public).**

Communication must be regular, honest, relevant, and tailored to the needs of the audience.

Common Sustainability Challenges

- **Getting buy-in internally (just another grant)**
- **Leadership turnover (losing your champion; organizational leadership; or other key personnel)**
- **Gaining internal & external trust and support**
- **Limited resources and competing priorities**
- **Measuring effectiveness**
- **External events that are beyond your control**
- **Yikes! It's not working.**

Seven Strategies to Build a Sustainable Grant Program

- Nurture and expand your partnerships.
- Communicate regularly with key stakeholder and constituency groups.
- Identify or cultivate strong program champions.
- Employ program evaluation to evaluate the impacts of a program.
- Leverage existing resources to gain new ones.
- Employ sound project management principles.
- Tell the program's story by illustrating its impacts on real people.

Ten Tools to Create Sustainable Programs

- **Create a project charter or MOU.**
- **Create a program webpage.**
- **Prepare an electronic newsletter.**
- **Hold a press conference or a press interview.**
- **Appear at a legislative hearing or briefing.**
- **Attend a public meeting.**
- **Distribute a public report.**
- **Release a program evaluation report.**
- **Publicize the program through social media.**
- **Prepare a Program Logic Model**

Lessons Learned

- **Integrate your initiative(s) into training.**
 - Program principles become sustainable once they are integrated as core components of a training curricula.
- **Create a cross-sector agency working group.**
 - A program is less likely to be sustained if it remains the domain of a single unit or individual.
- **Integrate program activities into the regular duties of staff.**
 - Do not rely on overtime (OT). Reliance on OT will tie the program activities to grant funds. When the grant funds disappear so will the activities.

Lessons Learned

- **Leaders must communicate and market their activities.**
 - “Spread the good word” both inside and outside the agency.
 - Demonstrate program principles by their own visible actions.
 - Reduce unfamiliarity with the program.
- **Engage other stakeholders, including the community.**
 - Raise the expectations of those stakeholders so they “demand” that the program activities continue.
- **Be flexible and responsive to data-driven decision making.**
 - Course-corrections based on analysis may be necessary.
 - External events may intervene and force a re-shuffling of priorities.
 - Be “nimble” and adaptable.

Questions for Participants

- **What challenges are you facing in sustaining your program?**
- **What are you currently doing to plan to sustain your program?**
- **What sustainability practices are you implementing?**
- **What needs to happen in your jurisdiction to support sustainability?**

Questions and Comments



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Thank you

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