

Guidelines for Extension Staff on Program Business Planning

These guidelines outline the policies and practices for using the program business planning process to achieve a successful transition to new program teams working in a regional delivery model. The purpose for preparing program business plans is to facilitate the development and delivery of Extension programs which are available to people throughout the state, have strong private and public value, and are financially sustainable.

Program business plans will be a powerful tool for helping UNHCE to:

- Identify the primary target audiences on a statewide basis
- Improve collaboration between field specialists and state specialists from relevant disciplines
- Develop solid and cohesive program logic models and evaluation plans for each new program team
- Explore ways to ensure the financial sustainability of programs

Steps in developing program business planning process:

1. Area of Expertise (AoE) identification
2. Needs assessment and priority setting
3. Development of program logic models
4. Develop impact indicators and evaluation plans
5. Development of technology and communication plans
6. Writing public value statements
7. Developing a Financial Plan (Year 2)

Area of Expertise Identification:

One of the very first things each program team will need to do is determine what AoEs they will form. While it may seem backwards to decide on AoEs before a team is finished with needs assessment, it is important to think broadly about programming needs and begin to organize staff around these AoEs. Members of these broader subject matter teams (i.e. Dairy & Livestock or Nutrition & Obesity) will need to come together to plan programs for their target audience(s). Each AoE should have at least three individuals as part of that team and probably no more than six members. An exception to this might be in the area of nutrition education (as we have a large core of Nutrition Education staff). Most will include at least one state specialist. The number of AoE's each program team will have varies – depending on the size of the team.

Needs Assessment and Priority Setting:

Program teams should work closely with their primary target audiences to identify program needs, set priorities and then write a plan for high quality programs.

No single method of needs assessment will work for all programs. Most programs will use many different approaches. Several potential data sources and considerations include:

- Results of recent program reviews
- Needs assessment results done by organized groups representing the target audience
- Needs as expressed in trade and academic publications
- Surveys or focus groups with the target audiences
- Involvement of UNH faculty/staff with related expertise
- Informal discussions with target audience
- New research findings which have applicability to the target audience
- Legal mandate to do a program (i.e. Pesticide Training)
- Hedgehog concept
- Grant funding already in place
- Staff capacity
- Availability of similar non-Extension programs

An Extension educational program would meet the hedgehog test if it had the all three of the following characteristics:

1. Extension is deeply passionate about because it contributes to the core values of Extension and to its educational mission.
2. The program can contribute more to its target audiences than any other organization in the state.
3. The scope of work for the program is feasible given the available human, financial and brand resources.

The “hedgehog concept” is central to the ability of a team to reach a consensus on a plan. Staff are encouraged to read the 35 page monograph by Jim Collins, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*. Also the website www.jimcollins.com has some useful discussion questions for teams to use.

Program planning teams may or may not include the entire program team staff. Some plans may be at the Area of Expertise level. Planning teams should include those who will be involved in the development and delivery of the program as well as appropriate university faculty or staff.

Development of Program Logic Models:

The purpose for preparing program business plans is to facilitate the development and delivery of Extension programs which are available to people throughout the state, have strong private and public value, and are financially sustainable.

A program is defined as a set of educational events and activities which all have the same overall objective and the same target audience. A workshop, web page or a fact sheet are not programs but they are outputs (activities). A program includes multiple outputs (activities) that lead to specified outcomes for a target audience (think logic model).

After each program team determines their unique “hedgehog concept” they are encouraged to develop as many programs for which they can complete a full plan. The number of different programs will depend on whether the program is an established one or a new effort, the number of field specialists on the program team, the method of delivery, and the size of demand. Generally, one or two outstanding programs are preferable to large numbers with low public value. Plans should be for 3-5 years of programming (knowing that changes can certainly take place along the way).

Additional resources to support logic model development:

- [UNHCE Logic Model](#)
- [Logic Model Criteria](#)

Developing Impact Indicators and Evaluation Plans:

Impact indicators are specific measures identified for each outcome in a logic model that signal what to measure in order to know if you’ve achieved the desired outcome. Indicators may be associated with multiple outcomes, but should be written as SMAART objectives: **S**pecific, **M**easureable, **A**udience-directed, **A**mbitious, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-bound. Example impact indicators:

40 fishermen per year participate in cooperative research proposals submitted to appropriate programs or agencies.

60% of NH youth surveyed involved in 4-H YD programs demonstrate an increase in specific life skills each program year.

Six months following program participation, 25 community leaders indicate they have implemented at least one new method or technique for engaging citizens in community decision-making.

Evaluation plans should be written that correspond to your program logic models. Evaluation plans provide an outline of what and how data will be collected in order to effectively evaluate the impact of programs.

Evaluation plans include the audience, types of data to be collected and how they will be analyzed, a timeline and responsible staff person.

Additional resources

- [Evaluation Plan Template](#)

Additional training and support for writing impact indicators and evaluation plans will be provided to teams.

Developing Technology and Communication Plans:

A plan for how technology might be used to deliver programs, expand the number of people reached and improve efficiency as well as how educational events will be promoted should be included in a program business plan. Components of a good technology plan include how social media and web sites will be used, eXtension resources identified, on-line courses, clicker technology, webinars, video, digital photos, etc. Given the importance of expanded use of technology outlined in the Re-Extension plan, program teams should consider carefully the types of technology they need in order to effectively and efficiently provide training for staff, gather needs assessment data, promote programs, engage existing and new clientele, deliver timely educational information, and evaluate programs. Communication plans may include methods of promotion, who will be responsible, timelines, etc. as well as plans for how impacts from the program will be shared with key stakeholders.

Writing Public Value Statements:

Public (vs. Private) Value: Public value is the value of an Extension program which occurs indirectly to non-participants of a program. For example, when lake water quality programs improve the quality of the lake all users of the lake benefit, even if they did not directly participate in the program. Even all local taxpayers benefit because the property values of lakeshore properties go up, cutting the taxes for people in other parts of the town. Private value is the value to those that directly participate in the program (Klein and Morse, 2009).

Additional training, resources and examples of public value statements will be provided at a later date.

Developing Financial Plan (Year 2):

While cost recovery and grants to support programs is a critical part of the UNHCE Re-Extension plan, teams will not be asked to formally do financial plans at first for their programs. However, it will be important to think about this in the future.

To develop a strong foundation for cost recovery while protecting Extension's historic mission, participation levels, and public support, during the first year the program teams should track costs per participant of programs, estimate participants' willingness to pay and participate in cost recovery training. Cost recovery is very important for the sustainability of programs but it should be secondary to the development of high quality programs on important educational needs.

Format of Final Extension Program Business Plan

Primary Element	Description
<i>Year I (developed by December 2012)</i>	
Executive Summary	Educational goals and objectives; target audience Delivery methods, locations Why Extension? Key contact and website
Program Team Members	Identification of field specialists and campus-based state specialists on team and any interested non-Extension UNH faculty, community and field collaborators.
Educational Program Summary	Description of the goals, activities and expected outcomes, and impacts from programs at the program team level (may include components from more than one logic model).
Implementation Plan	Who plays which roles, when and where? Types of events and delivery methods? How will UNH faculty, staff or students be involved?
Market Research on Target Audience Needs	Identification of program's target audience and their needs, availability of non-Extension UNH or other programs to address these needs, feasibility of developing and delivering a program, and Extension's comparative advantage in doing a program (reasons why Extension should do it).
Public and Private Value	Private value, the value to the participants, is essential for ongoing participation. Public value, the value to non-participants, is essential for taxpayer support. (Program Team Level)
Evaluation Plan	Types of output, outcome and impact evaluations completed and planned (Program Team Level)
Technology & Communication Plans	What appropriate technologies will be used to meet the educational goals and expand the audience? How will programs and impact be promoted? (Program Team Level)
Appendix - Logic models and Research-base	What is the educational theory that links inputs to outputs, outcomes, and impacts? What is the research-base for the materials being taught? Each team will likely have more than one logic model (AoE level) however the educational program summary should clearly communicate how the various programs are connected in a larger way.
<i>Year II and Beyond (developed as soon as feasible)</i>	
Financial Plan	Goal of these plans is to maximize participation in the short-run and to ensure high quality programs with long-term financial viability.

Klein, Thomas K. and George Morse. 2009. "Extension Program Business Plans," (Chapter 7), in Morse, et. al., **The Minnesota Response: Cooperative Extension's Money and Mission Crisis.** iUniverse, Bloomington.

Material adapted with permission from George W. Morse, Professor Emeritus, Email: morse001@umn.edu

Timeline for Program Business Plans

Date	Task	Training/Resources needed	Responsible person
March 26	Program Team Leader (PTL) Orientation	Expectations/process document for developing Program Business Plans	Ken/Lisa
April 1	Brief overview of process on blog or web for all staff to see		Lisa
	Teams begin meeting – receive training on needs assessment/program business planning process		Ken/Lisa PTLs
April 19	State Advisory Council is provided an overview of program business planning process		Ken
May 15	Area of Expertise identified		PTLs
June	Teams complete needs assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID target audience Study existing data Environmental scans; who else does this work? AoE Chairs identified (June 30)	Guidelines written; resources for existing data identified and shared on web Examples of needs assessments provided	PLT's with support from Lisa
July 2	Prioritize needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgehog concept Are we mandated to do this? What is UNHCE's comparative advantage? Capacity of staff Grants Politics 	Training on hedgehog concept Provide the monograph – Good to Great	Ken/Lisa Teams
August 15	Draft Program Logic Models developed – to include target audience; inputs, outputs and outcomes. Technology Plans should be developed as well.	Lisa to provide training, facilitation as needed	PTL's AoE Chairs
Sept 28	Public value statements drafted for each team	Training/resources on writing PV statements	
Sept 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact indicators developed for outcomes Evaluation plans written Staff responsible for evaluation and outcome reporting identified for each indicator 	Resources on writing impact indicators Example evaluation Plans	
Nov 1	Executive Summary of program business plans drafted		
Nov 30	Full business plan due to Extension administration (minus financial plan)		