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THE NOSR PROCESS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE APPLICATION

9 Monitoring—Placement and Follow-up

8 Orientation and Assessment—Enrollee Contracts

7 Recruitment, Client Selection, and Enrollment

6 Volunteers and Supportive Services

5 Work Stations Clusters and Classroom Modalities

4 Data Collection

3 **Planning Program Design Through Staff Training**

2 Staff Selection

1 Formation of the Councils

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Community Council
CETA	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act
CRQ	Community Resources Questionnaire
DOL	U.S. Department of Labor
IS	Impact Schedule
NOSR	National Office for Social Responsibility
TA	Technical Assistance
TRC	Technical Resource Committee
YNA	Youth Needs Assessment

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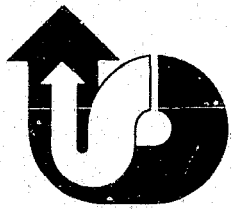
GUIDE 3:
PLANNING PROGRAM DESIGN THROUGH STAFF TRAINING



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GUIDE 3:
PLANNING PROGRAM DESIGN THROUGH STAFF TRAINING

PLANNING PROGRAM DESIGN

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2 The Importance of Staff Training
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Introduction

Ours is a society inundated with a multiple of social programs that have been generated to respond to the needs of culturally and economically disadvantaged citizens. Thousands of programs have approached the universal problems of youth unemployment and alienation from the accepted social order. Over the years, these programs have gradually been developed through the application of various social technologies. Hundreds of theories and approaches have been tested, accepted, abandoned, and revived. In the context of the comparatively recent proliferation and dissemination of work experience concepts, one must wonder why so many programs fail to attain the goals and meet the objectives they were designed to address.

Often, when a social program fails to make a positive impact on its clientele, the clients themselves are blamed. One hears the argument that youth, especially dropouts and minority youth with police records are difficult groups to reach. If a significant number of such clients revert to antisocial or delinquent behavior upon termination of the program (or even within program operation), the program is normally exonerated. Such failures are rationalized often enough, and chalked up to "difficulties inherent in dealing with certain segments of the population." Rarely, if at all, is media attention focused on the inadequacies of the program itself. The National Office for Social Responsibility believes that most programs that fail to attain their goals do so precisely because of inefficient or incompetent design and administration. More often than not, the failure on the part of the staff to accomplish necessary programmatic tasks within a critical time frame gets the program off to a shaky start, from which it may never recover. In particular, the NOSR believes that lack of timely, relevant, and comprehensive staff training tends to perpetuate inadequate and incompetent planning and administration. The result is a mishmash of unorganized activities, out-of-step phases, underdeveloped components, dissatisfied clients, and harried staff personnel.

The Importance of Staff Training

In the implementation of a complex program involving many components together with technical reasearch and evaluation instruments, it is essential that staff have a clear conception of the program's mission and structure. This should include a concise understanding and delineation of the respective roles, responsibilities, lines of authority, and functions related to specific tasks. If those areas are not clearly identified early on in the program, it may not be possible to salvage efficient delivery of services for the program participants.

This is particularly relevant to new programs which tend to assemble staffs which will, in the absence of comprehensive orientation and indoctrination, revert to former work habits and patterns. Except in rare circumstances, these feelings, outlooks, and conceptions regarding what is to be done and the consequent modi operandi will be fragmented, reflecting a previous lack of training and perpetuating an eclectic approach to program planning for client participation. It will be found that time spent in teaching staff an orderly and organized approach to the timely completion of critical tasks will result in more efficient administration and higher quality in the services delivered to program participants.

Program Planning as a Function of Staff Training

In developing the NOSR Youth Work Experience Program under contract with the Department of Labor, NOSR transferred various techniques and skills for staff training that had been developed and honed in previous programming. The result is the evolution of a method for staff training that also guides staff in planning and implementing the individual program. The NOSR training method transfers specific knowledge and skills to the staff as they are needed for different phases within the time frame of the Program.

One great advantage of combining staff training with Program planning is that roles are defined and redefined as needed in order to

accomplish specific planning and implementation functions. Accordingly, timing, a critical factor in planning and implementing a program, is programmed into the structure of the training sequence. This new approach to program planning, i.e., planning as a function of staff training, has been demonstrated successfully, and is currently being employed by balance of state sponsors in California and Iowa.

Staff Training Overview

The NOSR staff training method involves training Program staff, the Community Council, and the Technical Resource Committee in a process where they design and implement the specific operational program. In this staggered sequence of training sessions, staff members gain a concise understanding of their roles and responsibilities as related to specific activities and programmatic tasks. As the nature of these activities alters from phase to phase in the Program, staff are reorientated to and retrained for the specific task in an appropriate training session. The result is that the staff is trained to plan and execute each set of necessary tasks within the proper time frame.

The basic NOSR Staff Training Sequence encompasses seven training sessions which address the planning functions. The Technical Assistance Description, which follows, details the primary content, direction, and expected outcomes of the training sessions.

Technical Assistance Description

The technical assistance administered by the NOSR will cover the following three areas: the *planning functions,* the *maintenance functions,* and the *developmental functions.* The planning function refers to the method by which the Program moves from assessment to overall design, implementation, and evaluation. The NOSR addresses this function through a series of staff training sessions staggered across the Program time frame. The duration, content, and expected outcomes are detailed

in the next section. The other functions, maintenance and development, are addressed briefly at the end of this guide.

The Planning Function: Program Planning Through Staff Training*

TRAINING SERIES ONE: Orientation Information given to the Community Council and the Technical Resource Committee*

Duration: One day
Content: Transfer of information concerning:

- the National Youth Development Strategy
- research instruments: process and theory
- role definition and functions relative to staff, community, and youth service delivery systems
- utilization of research data in the planning process

Expected Outcomes:

- understanding of, and commitment to, Program concepts and overall structure, and the resulting ramifications
- the development of an initial steering committee to oversee policy and research initiatives within the operational program (This steering committee will be supplanted by the full councils (CC and TRC) when they are fully developed.)

*To simplify matters, training of the Community Council and Technical Resource Committee is included here as a part of the staff training series.

*The administration of Technical Assistance Training Series is flexible and individually prescribed. Although the general format is indicated below, the number of sessions and the exact timing will vary from community to community. See Appendix A for a sample NOSR technical assistance schedule.

Note:

The Community Council and the Technical Resource Committee will receive ongoing follow-up training in the application of research and evaluation instrumentation as part of their regularly scheduled meetings.

TRAINING SERIES TWO: Staff Development and Planning Session I

Duration: Three days

Content: Conceptual indoctrination to and training in the following areas:

- the National Youth Development Strategy
- orientation to the NOSR process and time lines for Program planning and development
- definition of respective roles, responsibilities, and programmatic functions, as related on Phase I
- research and evaluation process and staff roles in the administration of the Youth Needs Assessment, Community Resources Questionnaire, and Impact Scales instruments
- team building
- role clarification through skills analysis and application
- data collection skills
- liquid time organization system

Expected Outcomes:

- understanding of and commitment to National Youth Development Strategy
- understanding of individual roles, responsibilities, and skills
- overall grasp of the research elements of the Program and the several research instruments

- concrete plan and time line for the first phase of data collection, including identification of sources (one month).

TRAINING SERIES THREE: Staff Development and Planning Session II (research and data collection follow-up)

Duration: One or two days Timing and application follow a prescription approach and is determined by staff request.

Content: In-depth skill transfer and training in the collection of Community Resources Data and Youth Needs Data, including

- administration of the Community Resources Questionnaire
- administration of the Youth Needs Assessment Instrument
- conducting the Labor Market Analysis
- preliminary assessment of potentially available work stations
- preliminary assessment of potentially available classroom options.
- preliminary assessment of volunteers
- preliminary assessment of community supportive services

Expected Outcomes:

- staff competence in data collection and administration of data collection instruments
- working knowledge of, and basis for, development of work station, classroom, volunteers, and supportive services components

TRAINING SERIES FOUR: Staff Development and Planning Session III

Duration: One or two days

*Content:** Transfer of techniques and know-how relevant to program planning and using applied data These techniques and know-how will prepare the staff for specific Program design and client participation, and will include the following:

- planning techniques for using resource and assessment data
- assessment of potential supportive services
- advance skill training for staff development
- team building
- organizational techniques for dealing with the community, possibly including concepts of power relationships and assertiveness training
- orientation of staff to public policy development
- preliminary orientation for the selection of participants
- orientation to the NOSR Program structures
- orientation to process of client identification, recruitment, and selection

Expected Outcomes:

- understanding and firm grasp of planning techniques
- comprehensive knowledge of how data can effectively be applied
- competence in working with Community Council and community

*Many of the elements of this session are geared to preparing the staff for Training Series Five. These techniques are critical to proper staff support of the Community Council and Technical Resource Committee.

- complete preparation of strategies and data necessary to plan overall Program design with Community Council

TRAINING SERIES FIVE: Staff Development and Planning Session IV

Duration: Two or three days

*Content:** Application and utilization of research data in Program design and facilitation of the community's resolution of youth problem areas. This will include:

- presentation of research results
- specific orientation regarding planning
- planning for community-wide needs resolution
- identification of target population for selection of clients
- discussion and development of community-wide policy recommendations

Expected Outcomes:

- full delineation of overall Program design
- selection of target population
- establishment of community guidelines and/or recommendations for the Program
- policies and recommendations regarding application of research data to youth problem areas in the community.

TRAINING SERIES SIX: Staff Development and Training Session V

Duration: Two or three days

Content: Transfer of skills necessary for planning and implementing the particulars of the operational program. Includes

*This training session is administered to the Community Council, as well as the staff.

- in-depth exposure to Program specifics, including
  1. clustering work stations
  2. clustering classroom options
  3. integrating and systematizing supportive services
  4. recruiting and utilizing volunteer resources
- work sessions for applying Youth Development Strategy and Community Council policies to Program specifics
- training in how to conduct and facilitate small groups
- skill training in the writing and monitoring of client contracts and work station agreements
- skill training in performance counselling and in conducting team meetings within Classroom I
- planning of Program specifics based on the results of the Impact Survey
- guidance in establishing and maintaining a supportive relationship with the Community Council
- role definition and clarification

Expected Outcomes:

- staff competency in implementing Program operation
- thorough understanding of the relationship of the Youth Development Strategy to operational Program particulars
- staff competence in matching client needs with classroom and work station options through realistic client contracts
- staff ability to deal effectively with the client, and to assess and monitor his or her performance in the Program
- staff competency in conducting group workshops for clients
- staff ability to fully utilize community resources

TRAINING SERIES SEVEN: Staff Training and Development VI

Duration: One day

Content: Staff training for phaseout or recycling activities, including

- placement and realizing participant goals
- participant follow-up
- exit interviews
- developmental policy recommendations
- analysis of Program as it relates to data

Expected Outcomes:

- successful placements
- systematic and orderly phaseout or recycling of Program
- policies which impact institutional change

Note:

All training session are open and flexible to include remedial concentration in problem area such as:

- administrative inadequacies
- other identified needs pinpointed by the Program director, the Community Council, or other knowledgeable sources

The Maintenance Function*

The maintenance function consists almost entirely of technical chores which NOSR performs for the Program. In most programs, there will be four or five maintenance sessions. A brief outline of these sessions follows:

*Maintenance sessions will be geared and timed for the particular community, as are the other Technical Assistance functions.

Session I: Councils and Staff

- select and recruit appropriate Community Council and Technical Resource Committee members
- assist in the development of job descriptions for Program staff
- screen and hire staff
- assist in the development of proper forms
- specific orientation of Program director

Session II: Data Collection and Processing

- assist in compilation of data, including administration of Community Resources Questionnaire and Youth Needs Assessment
- code and process data
- analyze data

Session III: Participant Selection

- administer ramdom computer selection process
- administer Impact Scales
- Analyze Impact Scales for Program clients and their controls

Session IV: Wrap-up

- administer follow-up Impact Scales
- Analyze follow-up Impact Scales for participants and controls
- secure linkages for Community Council and Technical Resource Committee
- Analyze all data derived from research and evaluation

The Developmental Function

The Developmental sessions are optional for all Programs. They will consist mainly of advanced techniques of skill training related to specific Program areas. Accordingly, they can be either developmental of remedial in nature. If remedial, they will be designed to redress a programmatic failure or breakdown. These remedial sessions will be structured specifically to deal with the immediate and pressing problems. If they are developmental in character, they may be administered to encourage and facilitate high points of the Program. These sessions will promote experimental and ground-breaking techniques and designs. They will document for repetition highly innovative and successful applications of the various Program components.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE NOSR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SCHEDULE

PROCESS AREAS

PHASE I: Preparation

ACTION STEPS	MAINTENANCE	TRAINING SCHEDULE	OUTCOMES
1. Orientation to the Community	NOSR presentation		General Commitment and
2. Staffing and structure	Descriptions and roles		
3. Involvement of the Community	Check list of membership		Advisory and Technical Councils
4. Preliminary review and preparation for data collection	Brief orientation to directors	Training I for Councils Training II for staff	Understanding of research Common framework tools, and time line

PHASE II: Research

1. Youth Needs Survey	Prescribed to needs of community and cleared through Councils		Profile of needs
2. Community Resources Questionnaire			Resource inventory
3. Analyzing data	Coding, computers, etc.		Report on data

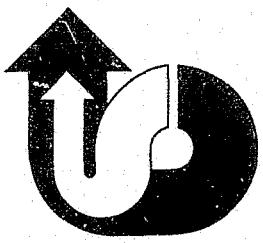
PHASE III: Planning			
1. Preliminary review of data and preparation for planning		Training III for staff	Preparation for joint planning sessions
2. Presentation of data and interrelating factors	Facilitation		
3. Establishment of general goals, policies, program design, and objectives		Training IV staff and Councils	Program design, community goals as derived from data, and recommedations
PHASE IV: Development			
1. Recruitment and and selection of youth	Impact instrument		In-depth information on the target group
2. Indentification of special areas of concern	Coding, computers, etc.		
3. Completion of assessment of resources, services, and needs			
4. Specific strategies, and approaches, and services to be used	Council and CBOS approval	Training V for staff	Specific element of Program design
PHASE V: Implementation			
1. Orientation and and client contracts	monitoring		Specific goals and objectives of youth employability plan and follow-through to completion of Program goals
2. Worksite assignments	monitoring	Optional skill training for staff	
3. Education components	monitoring		
4. Supportive services	monitoring	Optional skill training for staff	

(cont.)

5. Volunteer recruitment and utilization	monitoring		
6. Goal accomplishment	monitoring	Training VI for staff	Phaseout and follow-up preparation

PHASE VI: Phaseout

1. Administration of evaluation research	exit interviews		Impact data
2. Evaluation of research and program specifics and analysis of deficiencies	Council review		
3. Continuing feedback and follow-up of clients	Wrap-up meeting		Evaluations and recommendations



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